Can PS2 Bond take down GoldenEye?

TIMESPLITTERS 2
First info & pics

FIRST PICS OF FINAL FANTASY XI

computer and video games

UK EXCLUSIVE!

HALO

Xbox's killer blaster blows away the competition

FIRST REVIEW

ROGUE LEADER

Full game ripped open!
Ultimate verdict inside

'YOUR MOVE, CREEP'

JUDGE DREDD brings justice to PC, PS2 and Xbox

RETURN TO CASTLE

WOLFENSTEIN

Pops a pineapple in Quake 3's gob and pulls the pin!

PS2 · PC CD ROM · XBOX · GAME BOY ADVANCE

£2.80 • ISSUE 242 • JAN
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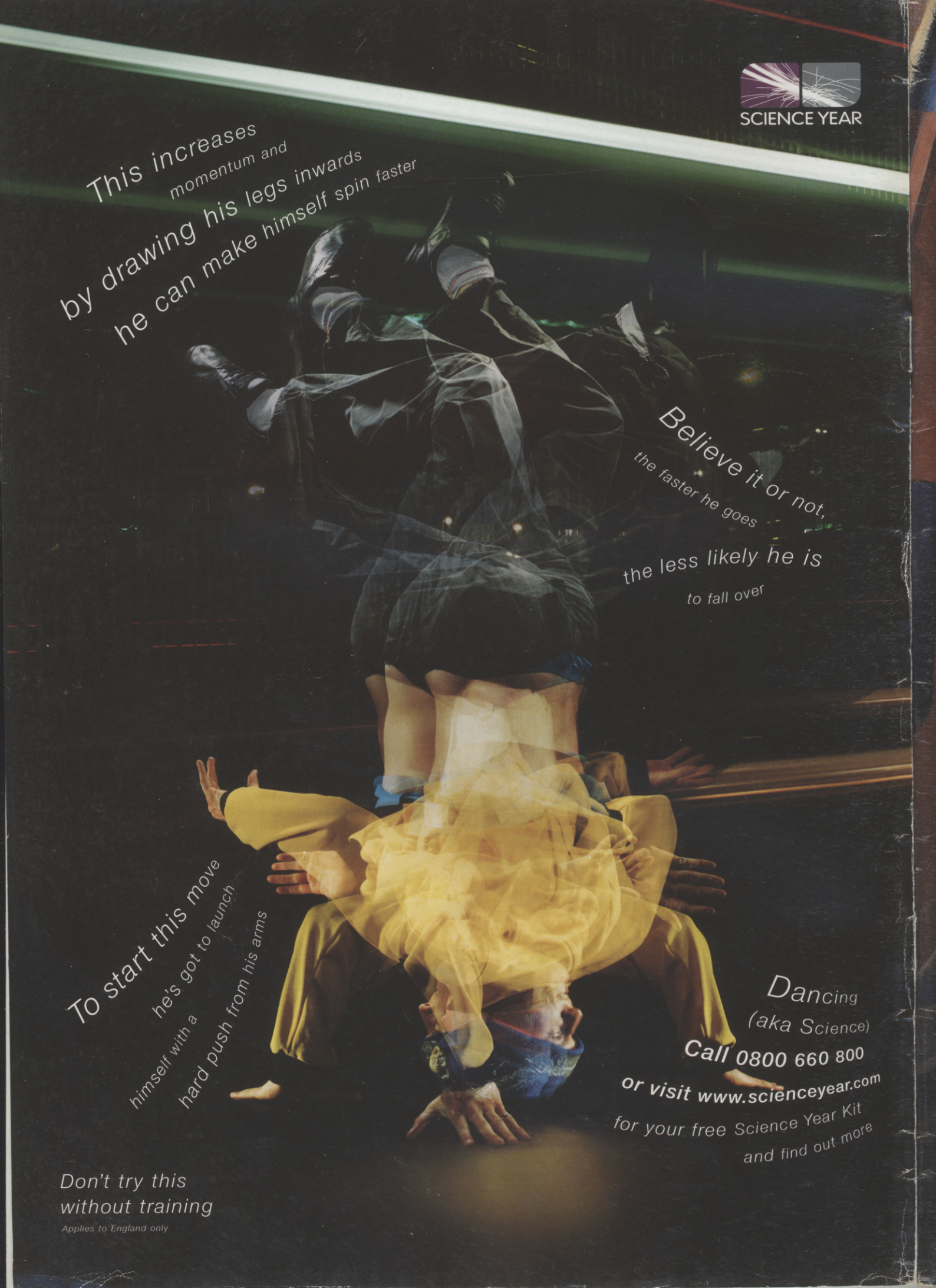
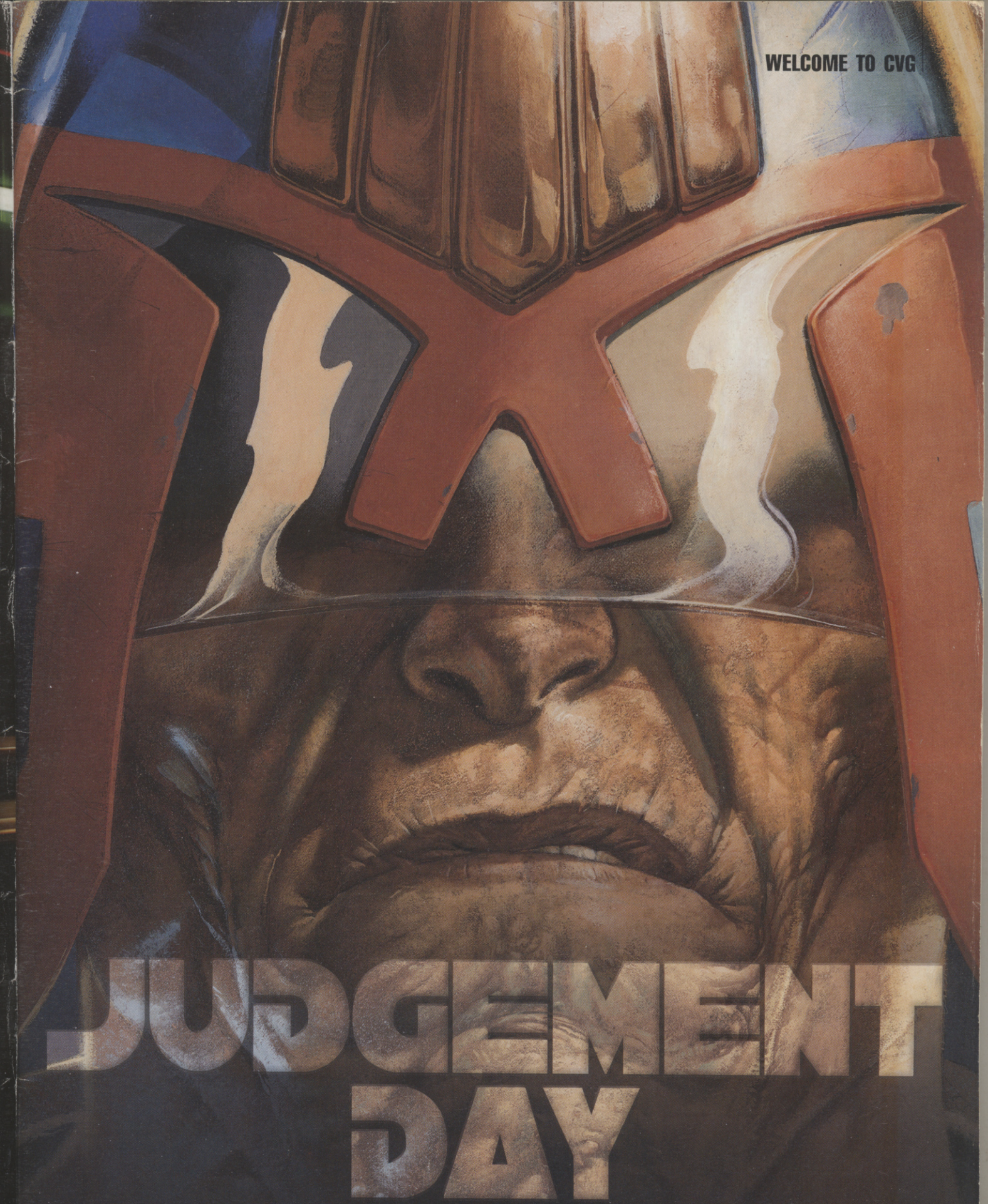

SCIENCE YEAR
This increases momentum and by drawing his legs inwards he can make himself spin faster
Believe it or not, the faster he goes the less likely he is to fall over
To start this move he's got to launch himself with a hard push from his arms
Dancing (aka Science)
Call 0800 660 800
or visit www.scienceyear.com
for your free Science Year Kit and find out more
Don't try this without training
Applies to England only



JUDGEMENT DAY

At last, we've got one. And boy is it a monster. Weighing more than a baby elephant (well, it seems like it), Xbox really is the gargantuan machine Microsoft has been promising. Physically it's a giant alongside PS2 and GameCube, and even comes with a warning that, if dropped on a small child, it could cause serious damage. Hell, accidentally knock one of these beasts off a table and it'll leave a dent in your stone floor, let alone the skull of your little sister.

But it's the games that really punched the wind from our lungs. For a launch game, Halo is staggering – bettered only by Mario 64 in our eyes. And with Project Gotham Racing, Amped and Munch's Oddysee all primed for a March 14 release, Xbox promises to deliver a killer line-up every discerning gamer will be gagging for. Still, it's got a long way to go to outshine PS2, with Metal Gear 2 almost with us. But then who knows what machine Metal Gear 3 will be released on? Here's hoping...

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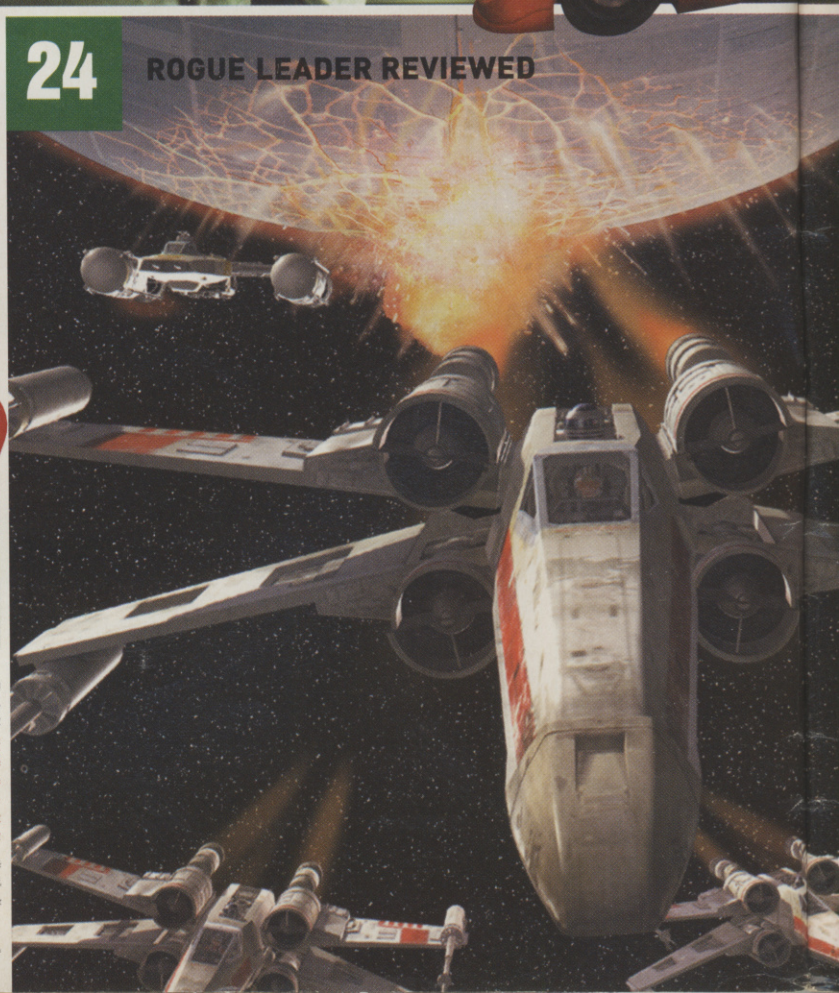


CACKMAN SPECIAL 48

CACKMAN 2002 Calendar

January

11th — SALT LAKE CITY 2002 Game out today! Excited Winter Olympics fans create their own salty lakes

8-11th — CES 2002 LAS VEGAS - Tedious electronics show held in seedy desert gambling den. Bill gates hosts Pod Race

31st — VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 on PS2 released in Japan Tricked into buying same old fighting game with two new characters. Note.

CACK-MAN SHOPPING LIST
Tekken 4 (PS2)
Dead Or Alive 3 (Xbox)
Soul Calibur 2 (PS2)

February

1st — Ghouls 'N' Ghosts mega-sequel, MA PS2 out in Japan! Off to run a graveyard in underpants, as sign of

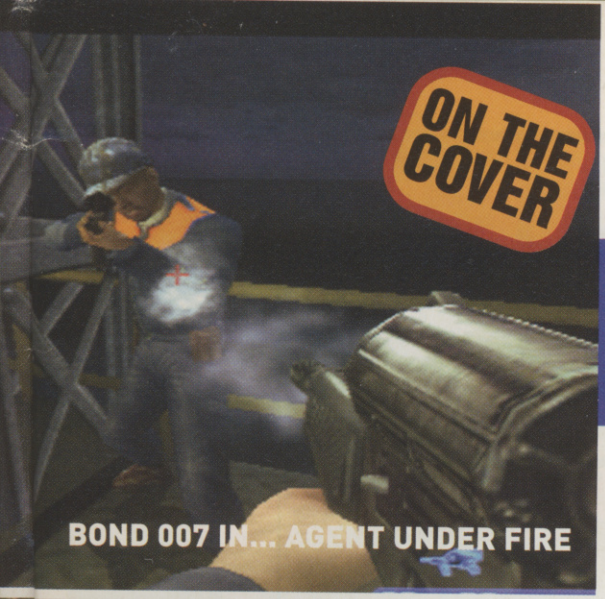
2nd — Held in police cells overn indecent exposure. Burly c rips my Maximo underwea

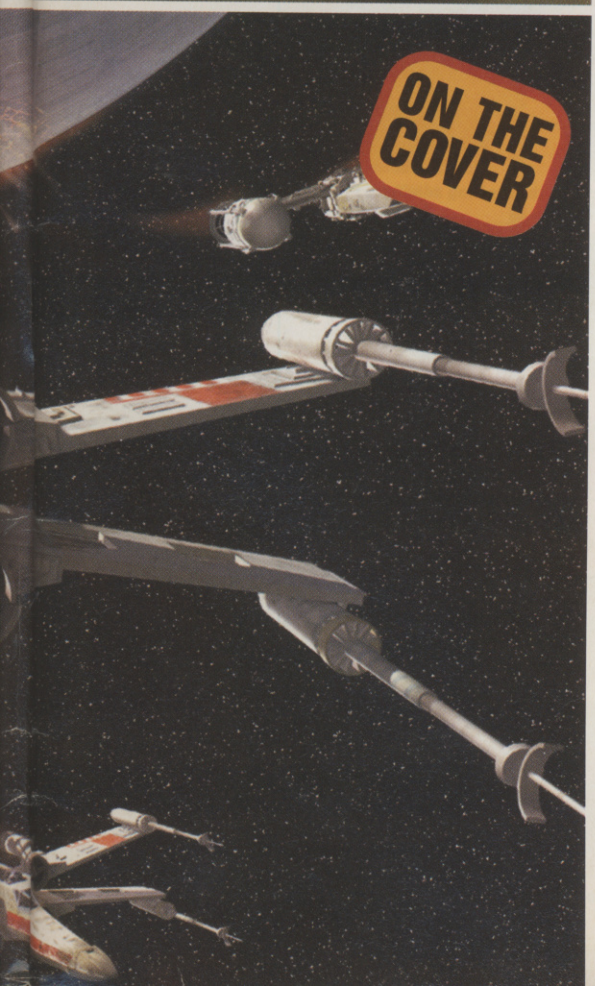
8th — MONSTERS INC hits cinemas.

9th — Released fr charged wit neighbour's gorilla suit.

15th — VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 US release

22nd-27th — METAL GEAR SOLID 2 out Metal Gear Solid 2. Started Solid 2 again. Gave up





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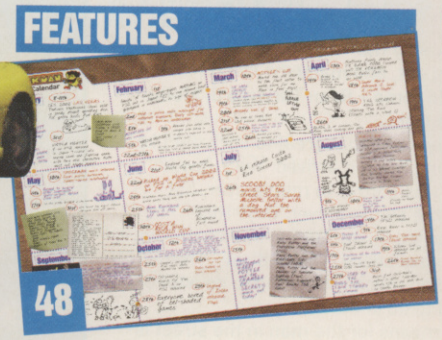

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PLANET CVG

THE HOTTEST GAMES & GOSSIP FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

TIMESPLITTERS 2 FOR PS2

Time On Your Hands

When the PS2 first appeared, it wasn't exactly the place where Mr Great Game liked to hang out, and many assumed that the real goodies were yet to come – Gran Turismo 3, Metal Gear Solid 2 and the likes. And they were right.

So the original TimeSplitters didn't need to be that great to stick out like a large, sparkling, if slightly flawed diamond when it arrived. Yeah, it was one of the best PS2 launch games, and it was bonzer in multiplayer, but what went wrong with the single-player, hey? Hey?

"We were constrained by the launch of the console," says Dave Doak, of developers Free Radical. "This time around we've had much more time to do a lot of the stuff we wanted to do in the first game."

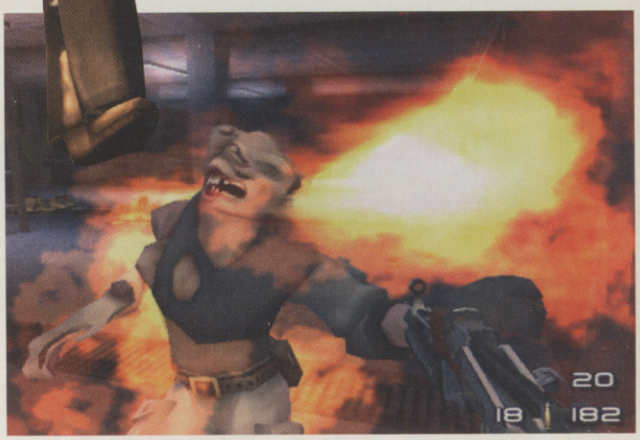
And what this means for the man in the street is an altogether faster, slicker, more compelling version of the first game. TimeSplitters 2 is a whole new beast. Can you hear it roar?

"The name and feeling of the game are the same," adds Doak. "But the graphics are faster and there's more storyline and more objectives."

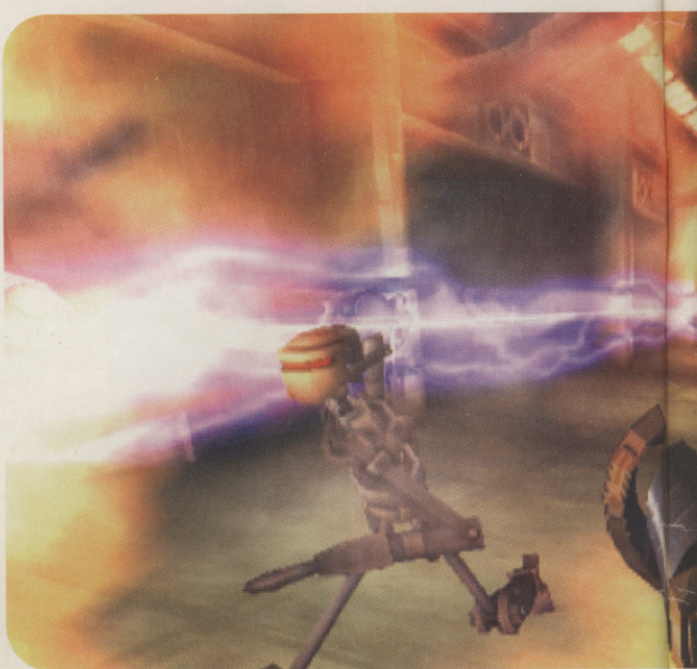
As before, you get to visit different time periods and play as various characters on the way. We've seen a Nineties military plant (very GoldenEye) and a gangster level, but other levels include six-shooter showdowns in the Wild West and a cool-sounding Notre Dame level where you track down a Jack The Ripper-style nutter in Victorian Paris. The storylines vary from level to level, but each ties in with the central plot of defeating those time-travelling alien scum, the TimeSplitters. Yeah, it's running and shooting, but you'll be asked to do a lot more than just run and shoot.

Keep an eye out for this one some time in 2002. You can bet your sorry ass we will be.

If it's at all like the original, the emphasis will be on fun



Woah! Check out the melting zomboid. Put a few slugs in him to be sure



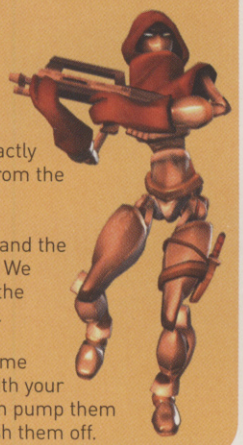
There's enough electricity flying about here to power the national grid

TIMESPLITTERS 2: WHY IT'S GONNA ROCK

In the gangster level you get a mini-game of pool with your weapon as a cue. "It works really well with a sniper rifle," says Doak.

There are heaps of characters for Multiplayer and Challenge modes. Including – and how cool is this? – monkeys!

The music is suited to each level and it's got atmosphere in spades.



All the characters have different animations, so, for example, the robots move like robots and not exactly like the geezers from the previous level.

The backgrounds and the props are cool as. We particularly liked the exploding melons.

You can scorch some unlucky geezer with your flamethrower then pump them full of lead to finish them off.

Burn, baby, burn. Let's flame-throw a party

IS THE 'CUBE BANGING THE 'BOX?

Game On!

A SNES versus Mega Drive style sales war has erupted in America with the release of Xbox and GameCube. Nintendo's 'ickle handbag-alike and Microsoft's hulking great brute are locked in mortal console combat like we haven't seen for years.

First we were told a US survey asking which console gamers planned to buy come Chrimbo found Xbox was number one, followed by PS2 and Game Boy Advance, with 'Cube in a dismal last place.

However, when it came to the launch last month, some reports showed the 'Cube ahead, with Nintendo claiming to have sold $100 million worth of consoles during the first day of launch. That's been followed by counterclaims that the wider picture shows Xbox has in fact trounced 'Cube sales. Anything from price (GameCube is $199 compared to $299 for the Xbox), to wider availability, launch game quality and buyer loyalty is being suggested as a reason for the (wildly fluctuating) sales claims.

Frankly, short of standing outside every US shop and counting them ourselves, we don't know what to believe. Anyway, like pervy geeks at a mud-wrestling match, we say, "Who cares who wins?" So long as both get class games and we all enjoy ourselves.

BUT WHAT ABOUT EUROPE?

Yeah, yeah, so the Yanks are filling their homes with Xboxes and GameCubes, but what do we get in Blighty? A lengthy wait, that's what.

At least Microsoft has got its act together enough to announce a launch date and price. The Xbox has been confirmed for a March 14, 2002 release at a price of £299.

But GameCube? Who knows? Despite the fact that Japanese gamers have had it since September, the latest talk is of a May 2002 launch for the UK.

PS2 AND XBOX ONIMUSHA PICTURES

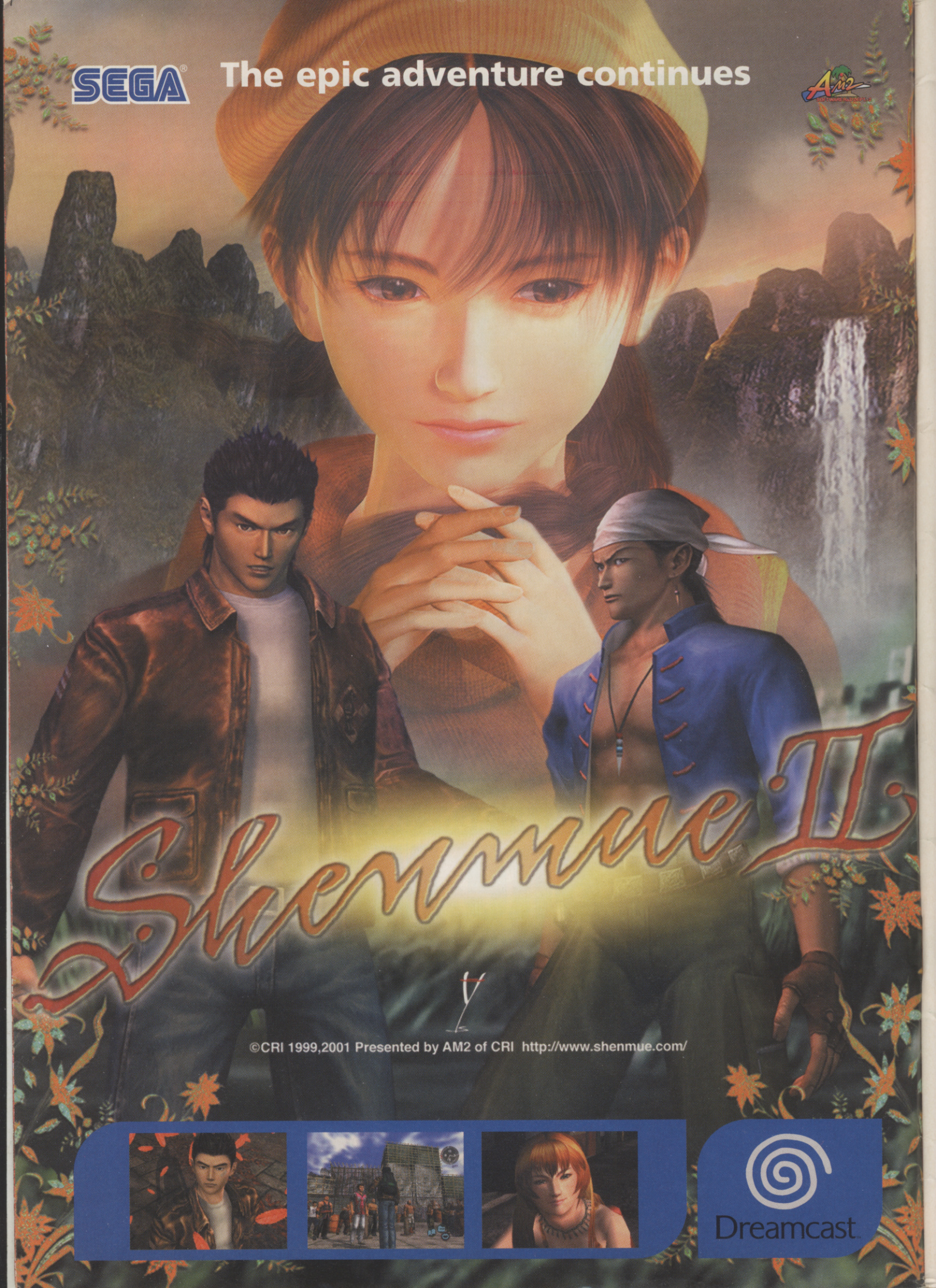
Bite Me Baby!

With all the talk of Onimusha coming to Xbox, news of the PS2 sequel seems to have almost gone unnoticed. Set for release in Japan in March, it features Jyuubei, a new lead character who can enlist the help of other non-player characters in fights.

There's no news of a UK release date for the PS2 sequel, but, in a bit of a coup for Microsoft, the heavily reworked Xbox version of the original, Genma Onimusha, is due out here in March. New areas, new monsters, a new fighting system, and it looks mint as you can see for yourself from this pair of mouth-waterers.

PS2 sequel: giant slug or crazy tongue?

Genma on Xbox: remember this location?


SEGA
The epic adventure continues
Shenmue II
©CRI 1999,2001 Presented by AM2 of CRI http://www.shenmue.com/
Dreamcast

Stealthy it ain't, but it gets the job done

You're a one man lobotomy machine

WICKED FIRST SHOTS OF IGI 2 FOR PC

"Your Mission? Hide Like A Girl"

Guess who's seen IGI 2: Covert Strike for the PC – in action? That's right, us. Lucky, lucky us.

Expect more of the same stealth-based shoot 'em up thrills, but with extra lights and buzzers on. One improvement, say developers, is the game's AI – your enemies should now react in a much more lifelike way. "You used to be able to walk in a room, shoot a guy, and the other guy in the room wouldn't notice. That won't happen anymore," says David Solaris of Codemasters.

IGI 2 relies heavily on the stealth aspect. A 'thinker-shooter' is how Solaris describes it. In addition, the multiplayer mode has been heavily tweaked with lots more emphasis on team-based games.

So if you fancy Unreal-meets-GoldenEye-meets-Metal Gear Solid amid exotic worldwide locations, better set aside Spring 2002 for IGI 2.

The pay-off for your sneaking? Explosions

NEWS SHORTS

Looky here, a new shot from Unreal Championship, the latest instalment in the awesome shooters series coming to Xbox. And if that isn't enough to whet your appetite, we've got a whole glut of Unreal-based info coming your way in next month's issue. Details on Unreal 2 and Unreal Tournament 2, to be precise!

"Some of the bloodiest combat scenes in Xbox gaming" are promised by Ultimate Blade Of Darkness, scheduled for winter 2002. This is a fantasy hack 'n' slash sequel to Severance, allowing players to chop off an enemy's arm then use the dismembered limb as a club. Whether there's any game beneath the blood remains to be seen.

Get ready to stroke your chin, London's Barbican Gallery is hosting an exhibition of videogames. Called Game On, the expo runs from May 16 to September 15 next year and focuses on 40 years of gaming from the early 1960s to the present. Included will be sections on key individuals in games history, as well as spotlights on major titles, such as the first-ever videogame, Computer Space.

Developer Top Trumps

COLLECT THE SET!
Number #5 Alexey Pazhitnov

Alexey Pazhitnov is the Russian geezer who invented Tetris in 1985 but didn't get any royalties until 1996!

TONGUE-TWISTING NAME Get a smack if you say it in front of your ma	**70**
WORTH Up 'til '96, zilch. But now? Off the scale, for sure	**70**
PAST HITS Tetris. You might have heard of it	**90**
STAYING POWER Developed other games, e.g. Pandora's Box	**40**
GEEK OR GOOD LAD? The man has a beard. Say no more	**40**
FUTURE POTENTIAL New versions of Tetris are appearing all the time	**60**

DC GETS MORE CHOICE ONLINE

DC Dreamkey ISP Yippee!

Dreamcast online never achieved its true potential in the UK, partly because you couldn't choose your own ISP like you could in the US.

Not before time Sega Europe is now enabling DC owners to choose their own Internet provider – by updating their web browsing software to the Dreamkey 3.0. The CD, released next year, will let users select their own ISP, and coincides with Sega's plans to merge its Dreamarena portal with its European site, www.sega-europe.com.

DC owners will be able to check their Dreamcast emails on PC, as well as being able to play online as usual.

Choose your own ISP with Dreamkey 3.0

What do you mean you've given up on DC?

Ripe For Revival

The retro bandwagon is rollin', rollin', rollin'. CVG jumps aboard

By Alex Huhtala

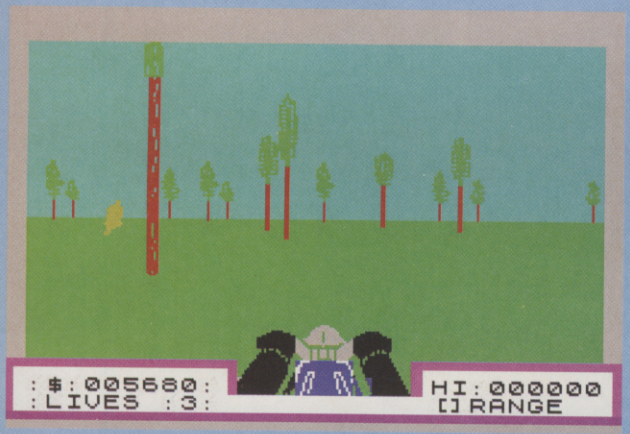
DEATHCHASE

Spectrum, 1982

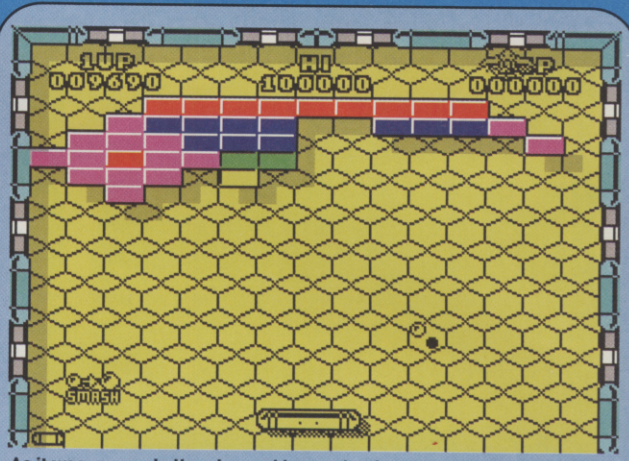
THE ORIGINAL
Like the speeder bike chase from Return of the Jedi – but on motorbikes! Burn through a forest and zap other bikers, tanks and helicopters. Strangely, nothing fires back at you, but death is frequent due to crashing into trees.

WHAT WE'D ADD
Revive it as a big online multiplayer frag-fest. Add impressive bike physics like in ATV Off-Road Fury and mint level design boasting those famous trees and, er, other hazardous environments.

WHEN IT GETS RELEASED
No doubt PC geeks will release mods allowing you to play footie on the bikes or put Homer Simpson samples in it – great!



"Honestly, you'd swear you were actually on a bike, it was *that* realistic"



As it was: more challenging and longer lasting than PS2's The Bouncer?

BATTY

Spectrum, 1987

THE ORIGINAL
Batty was the greatest Breakout clone there ever was, thanks to great power-ups like the jet pack that enabled you to fly to the next level or the laser to zap the aliens that attack.

WHAT WE'D ADD
Doesn't need much tinkering – a few more power-ups and aliens, and a two-player combat mode with two bats on opposite sides of a wall, the idea being to destroy each other. And it has to be on GBA.

WHEN IT GETS RELEASED
Would be brilliant until some geek tells you that £34.99 is a lot of money to pay for something that was given away free with a Speccy mag 15 years ago. Oh.

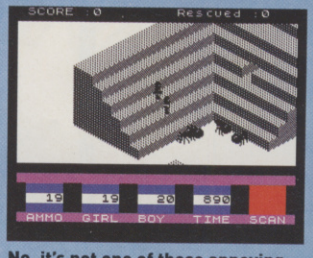
ANT ATTACK

Spectrum, 1983

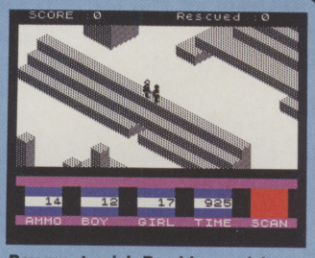
THE ORIGINAL
You rescue people from the giant-ant-infested lost city of Antescher.

WHAT WE'D ADD
Even more elaborate architecture, different types of ant, vehicles, new weapons, bigger levels and and safe houses. Again, must be GBA.

WHEN IT GETS RELEASED
Ants aren't that terrifying, so they'd be replaced with spider mods.



No, it's not one of those annoying optical illusion pictures



Boy meets girl. Boy kisses girl. Girl gets eaten by ant

MORE, MORE, MORE

Reviving old games is nothing new but the current rush for retro remakes is staggering. Boulderdash, Broken Sword, Defender, Duke Nukem, King Of Fighters, Puyo Puyo, Sabrewulf, Speedball 2, Super Mario World, The Last Ninja and Wings are just some of the oldies heading to GBA this year.

Other wrinklies due to appear on multi formats include Defender Of The Crown and Out Run. What do you think? Are there any old classics you'd like to see brought up to date? Write in to the usual address and let us know.

GBA Sabrewulf: for 30-somethings?

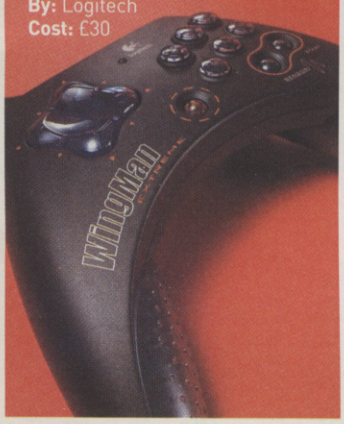
Speedball is back, this time on GBA

Crash Test

DON'T GET LUMPED WITH TRIPE

WINGMAN EXTREME

By: Logitech
Cost: £30



This PC joypad doesn't have analog sticks but goes one better by including motion-sensor technology. After a slight faff with calibration, you get to play games by simply tilting the pad left and right, or up and down. It works great for space shooters and flight games, but is pants for first-person shooters.

★★★★★★★★★★

CLICKSMART 510

By: Logitech
Cost: £140

Let the digital age into your life with this stunning webcam/digital camera combo unit. It may be pricey but you get quality for your cash. The unit itself is small and easily detachable for your roving images, and comes packed with all the image editing and video software you could need. Great value, great fun.

★★★★★★★★★★

DVD COMMANDER II

By: Saitek
Cost: £20

The official Sony DVD remote is coming out soon, but in the meantime here's another contender. The Saitek remote is sleek and slick and isn't something you'd be embarrassed to have on show, unlike some rivals. It basically does what it says on the tin. A good alternative to the official option.

★★★★★★★★★★

XPLODER CHEAT SYSTEM

By: Blaze
Cost: £20

The best-selling PlayStation cheat system explodes onto PS2 crammed with cheats for the latest games like Code: Veronica, GT3 and PES. The www.xploder.net website is always updated with new codes for your collection, so if you're a lightweight who needs to cheat you should get your mitts on this. But try it out first.

★★★★★★★★★★

OLD SKOOL

How it used to be...

15 YEARS AGO
February '87
The Last Ninja
Format: Commodore 64
An isometric adventure with plenty of fights. Battling through Lin Fen Island, you must overthrow an evil Shogun, defeating guards and negotiating deadly hazards. Top music too.

Contact Sam Cruise. Format: Spectrum
Search for clues and wear disguises as you attempt to solve the case of the Bali Budgie.

Paperboy. Format: Commodore 64/Spectrum
Deliver the papers from your BMX, but watch out for hazards.

Cobra. Format: Commodore 64/Spectrum
Based on the Sly Stallone flick, this Ocean creation was big back when film tie-ins used to be all the rage.

10 YEARS AGO
February '92
Monkey Island II: LeChuck's Revenge. Format: PC

LucasArts' finest point-and-click hour. The continuing adventures of Guybush Threepwood and his pirates mixes perplexing puzzles and good gags. Alas, subsequent sequels haven't been in the same league.

Speedball II: Brutal Deluxe. Format: Mega Drive
Violent future sport with great gameplay. GBA version coming soon.

Populous II. Format: Amiga
Sequel to the god sim that started it all. Better than the original.

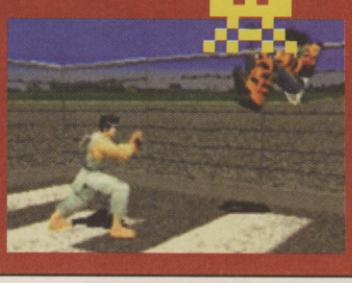
Gradius: Format. PC Engine
Great shoot 'em up hits home with a stunning conversion.

5 YEARS AGO
February '97
Rage Racer. Format: PSone
Stunning third instalment in the Ridge Racer series – the best racer on the PSone until Gran Turismo showed up.

Command & Conquer: Red Alert. Format: PC
More C&C greatness, this time with time travelling and, more importantly, Tesla Coils!

Tempest 2000/Tempest X. Format: Sega Saturn/PSone
The only reason to buy an Atari Jaguar vanishes as Jeff Minter's classic hits rival consoles.

Fighters Megamix. Format: Sega Saturn
Mammoth fighter from Sega's AM2 team, featuring every character from the hits Virtua Fighter 2 and Fighting Vipers. There are also ten secret characters gathered from AM2's illustrious past, including the Hornet car from Daytona! A real treat.

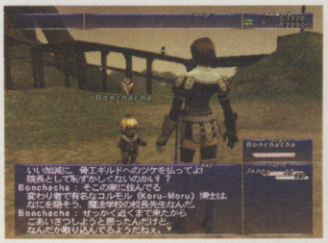


"This One Goes All The Way To 11/10"

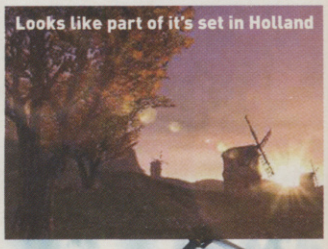
FF11: NEW SHOTS 'N' DETAILS

Feast your eyes upon these new shots from Square's forthcoming Final Fantasy XI. Do they look tasty or what?

Not to be confused with Final Fantasy X, which will be out here in April(ish), FF11 is an online-only game which won't appear until at least 2003 and will rely on you using broadband Internet connections to create parties of up to six players. As many as three parties will be able to band together in uber alliances, and you should be able to talk both to other players in your party and those within the alliance.

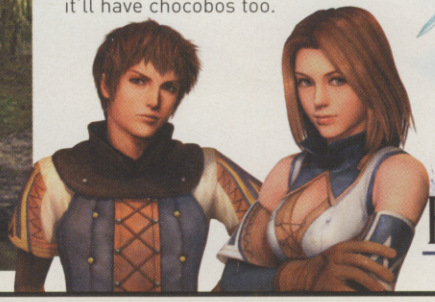


Don't buy the Japanese version, then



No Riverdance influences here, oh no

It seems most of the elements of FF that we've come to know and love will still be there – reams of player stats, a turn-based battle system using Fight, Magic, Ability and Other – as well as loads of new stuff like different nations and kingdoms and the use of different games servers to create parallel worlds. Oh, and it'll have chocobos too.



Spot The Dan

See if you can find Dan's head hidden in the mag. There's a rare CVG t-shirt in it for the first email answer out of the hat. Like there would've been last month, if a weird black hole hadn't made Dan's head vanish from where the design dudes put it. Okay, we messed up. Soz.

Last month Dan's fantasy of being the bloke in Steps whose name no-one remembers *nearly* came true

Half-Life: but it ain't just shooters on offer

Making Quake III rock online.... at a price

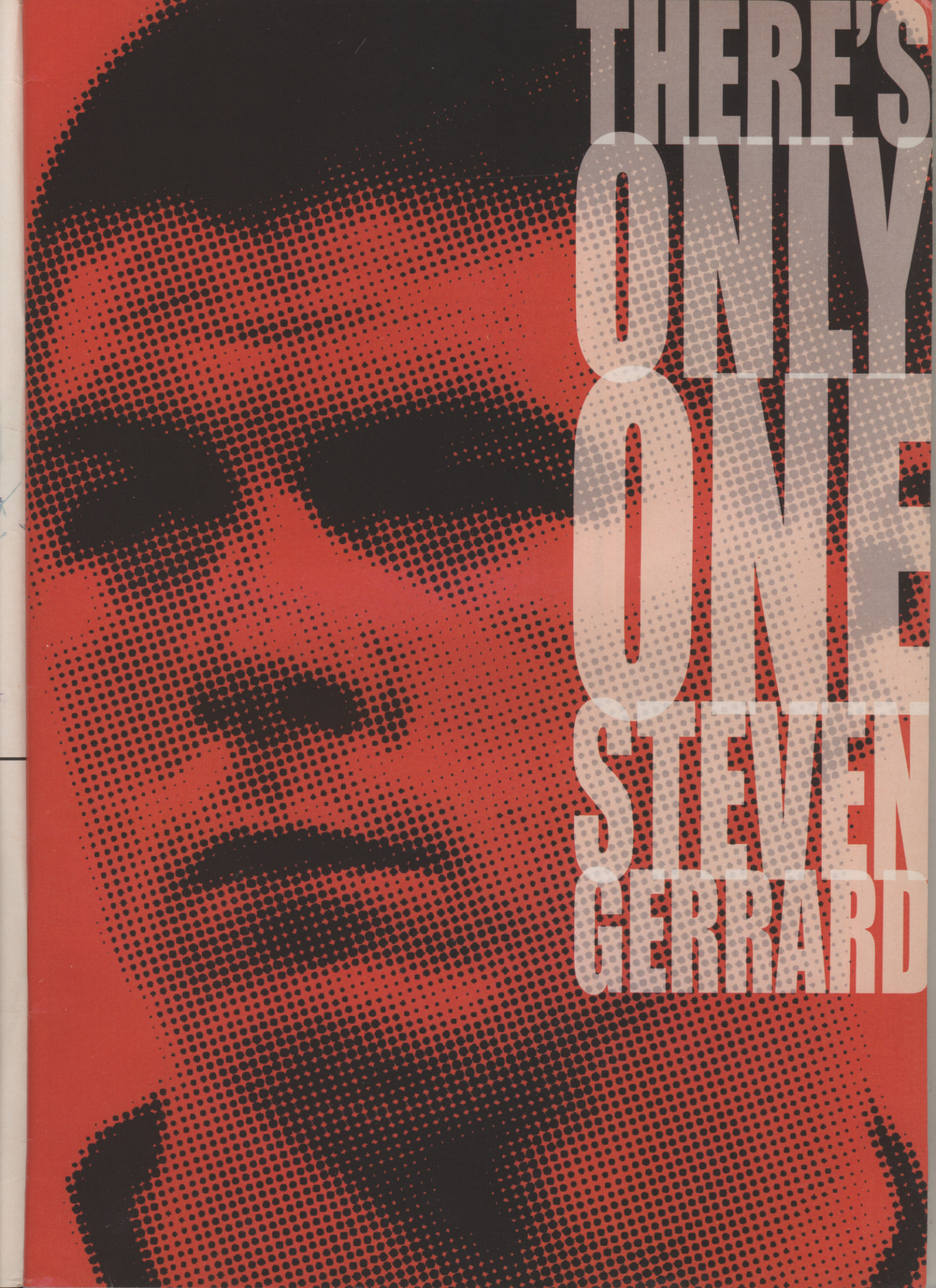
FASTEST ONLINE GAMING YET?

"Web-Walloping!"

Fed up with horribly slow online gaming? BTopenworld reckons it could have the answer, offering what it believes will be some of the fastest gaming servers anywhere in the world.

We've had higher lag over our office network than what BTopenworld is predicting its customers will have using ADSL connections, and even ISDN will be sub-100 pings, with up to 4,500 players online from launch. It's not just aimed at hardcore shooter freaks either – 200 different games will be playable, ranging from Age of Empires to Commandos 2.

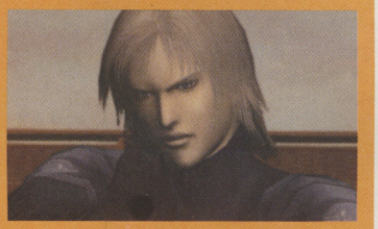
Sound good? The down side is it'll cost £9.99 a month to use their servers, but its free until January. Even then, they'll keep some free servers. Check out www.gamesdomain.co.uk.


THERE'S
ONLY
ONE
STEVEN
GERRARD

NEWS SHORTS

You heard it here first: Codemasters is looking at developing a voice recognition system for the Xbox version of LMA Manager which will probably be released late next year. One thing's for sure – more and more games will be developed with this system in mind.

Here's a date for your diary. Write neatly now – it's a biggie. Metal Gear Solid 2 for the PS2 comes out on February 22 next year. Finally, an exact date. Anyone excited?



Meanwhile, if you were looking forward to Creatures action on your handheld, you'll just have to wait a little longer. The AI sim management game has been delayed until January 11 on the GBA after originally being pencilled in for November. Whoops.

THIS MONTH: LUIGI'S MANSION

A ring-tone classic from Johnny Minkley

8e2, 8-, 8e2, 8-, 8e2, 8-, 4e2, 4-, 4c2, 4e2, 4#d2, 4-, 4b1, 4-, 2-, 2-, 4-, 8d2, 8-, 8d2, 8-, 8d2, 8-, 4d2, 4-, 4b2, 4d2, 4c2, 2-, 4a1, 4b1, 4- 4e1, 2-

Tempo: 225
(For Nokia phones with Composer only)

REVEALED: SECRETS OF XBOX

"Hey, What Does This Option Do?"

A frequent cause for complaint from UK gamers is that American and Japanese games released here run more slowly – and at a different screen size – than they do in their home countries.

But it looks like Bill Gates might have been listening, because Xbox games will run at exactly the same rate whether you're playing in Washington or Walthamstow, and with no borders either. The basic problem has been the difference between NTSC format (used by American and Japanese gear) and PAL, used over here (for a full techy lowdown – see below).

Looking beneath the bonnet of the Xbox, options have been built in to the hardware, allowing users to select 60Hz as a permanent setting for all games, meaning no slow-coach games, and the same screen size as everywhere else – so an even playing field when deathmatching online.

This beats the PS2 approach hands down. On Sony's machine, only a limited amount of games allow you to play at 60Hz (they're either optimised or developers don't bother), and even then you have to select it from the game, not from your machine.

There's more. Through the 'Xbox Dashboard' ('settings menu' to you and me) you can specify the size of your TV screen, so if you've got a widescreen telly, all games will automatically fit the screen.

SO WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN? ALLOW US TO EXPLAIN...

American TVs use the 60Hz NTSC system, which US-developed games are made for. UK tellies are PAL, running at 50Hz, so you can't play NTSC games on them. If developers don't re-code for the PAL system, you get black borders (making everything seem fatter), and it runs slower than NTSC. However, most UK TVs – especially newer ones – can run at 60Hz if you use a scart, so *some* PS2 games allow you to choose 60Hz in their options screen. The Xbox system means that Brit gamers' prayers have at last been answered.

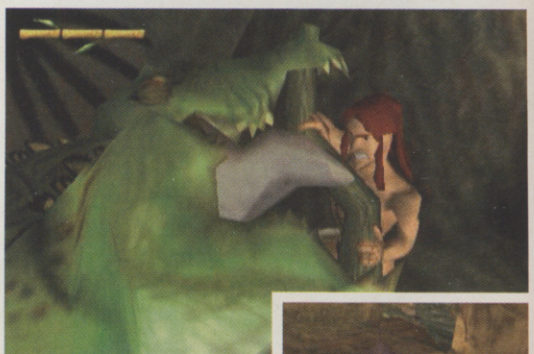
SHOTS OF TARZAN: FREERIDE ON GAMECUBE

Jungle Is Massive

A moment's pause as you have a good old gawp at these white-hot GameCube screens. Take your time...

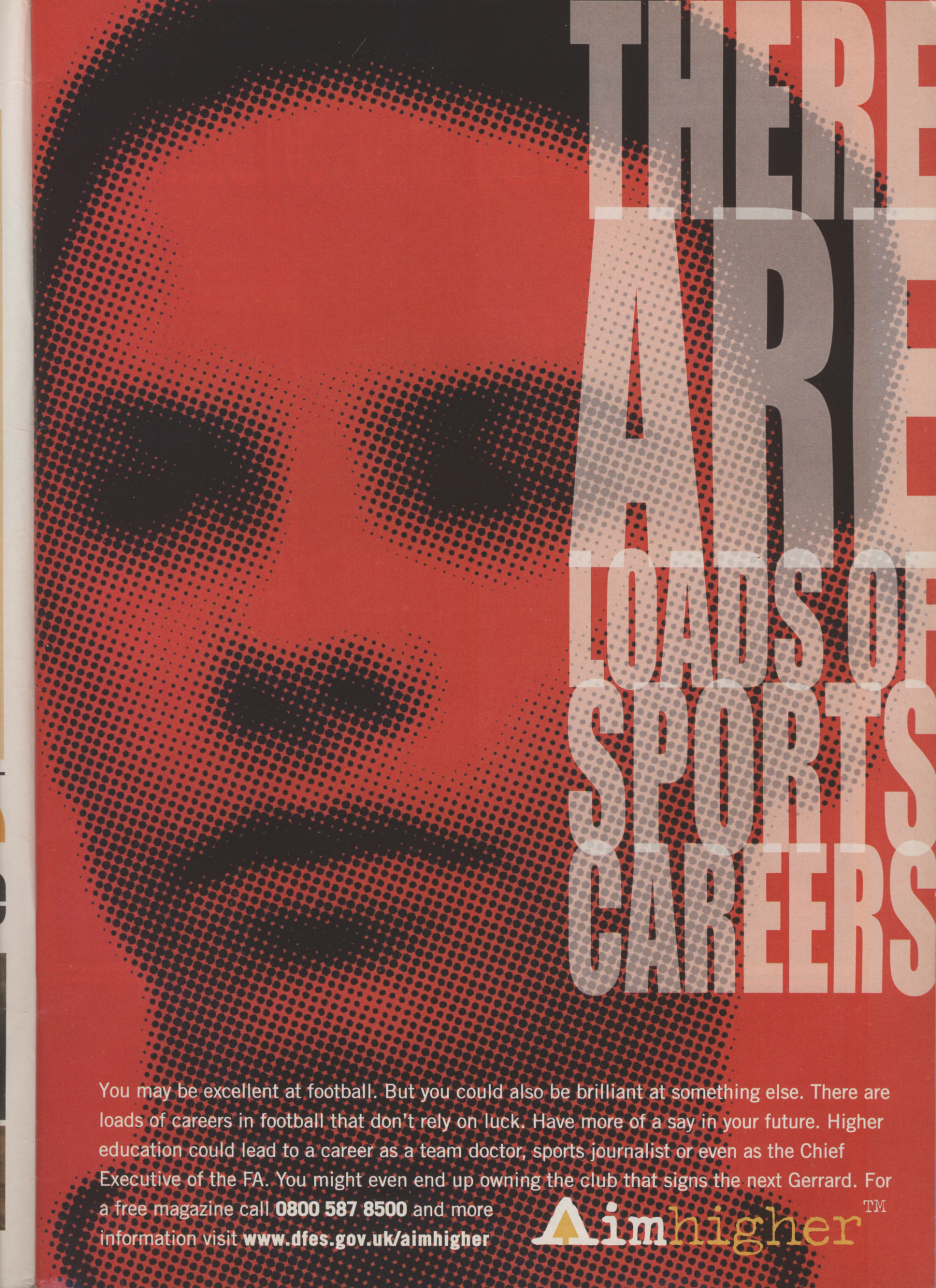
Sweet as, aren't they? They're from the Disney/GameCube team-up Tarzan: Freeride, which sees the long-haired leather pants-wearer dishing out jungle-based justice, and making his way across treacherous greenery – all looking peachy on the GameCube's souped-up graphics engine.

Hey, so what's with the 'Freeride' in the title? Well, old Tarz will be using the forestry around him for all manner of – wait for it – 'free rides'. So far we've only seen his mad log surfboard (not that kind of log, fool), which allows him to collect Tony Hawk's-style trick points – but more are in the pipeline. One thing, though. Where's Cheetah at?



"Crap in my drinking hole, would you? Eat it you crock 'o sh..."

A complex mating ritual? Nah, Tarzan's just doing press-ups!



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COLIN'S ON HIS WAY BACK – THIS TIME WITH KNOBS ON

"Make Way For McRae"

Here's a question – this shot is taken from which country's rally: Kenya, Cyprus or Finland?

"Where can we get a tree so near to Christmas?"

"There are a lot of rally games around. V-Rally, Tommi Makinen, World Rally Championship – but to my mind every single one of these games has failed to deliver what we have."

Them's fighting words from Colin McRae Rally 3 head honcho Guy Wilday. But then, McRae's One and Two did widespread damage to the wallets of the nation, and its PS2 debut's looking the business too.

"Simply porting the game and enhancing the graphics was never going to be enough for PS2 and Xbox owners," says Wilday, who explains McRae 3 has been given the thorough going-over it deserves. The emphasis this time around is on McRae himself, as players have to guide him through a three-year contract with Ford.

To get a flavour of the hurly-burly world of rallying, developers spent arduous hours watching them, as well as picking Col's brains at every available opportunity.

The result, they hope, is a game that takes into account the behind-the-scenes activity, as well as zooming in on the interaction between McRae and co-driver Nicky Grist.

Nevertheless, the core of the game remains the same. You still won't see other cars in single-player ("Because, in real-life, seeing other cars is the exception rather than the rule," says Wilday) and you'll still be treated to gorgeous-looking landscapes and nail-biting time limits. Sounds like business as usual, but with knobs on. We'll have to wait 'til next year to see it in action.

TICKA TOCA STORY SHOCKER!

Not content with beavering away on Colin McRae, those busy blokes at Codemasters have gone and developed a new version of TOCA Touring Car too – and this time it's actually got a storyline.

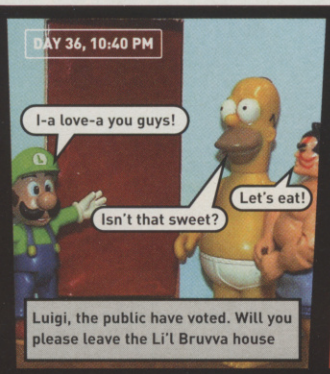
"Ryan McKane, Melaine Sanches, Nick Landers in... TOCA Race Driver," announces the press release in full movie-trailer mode. And sure enough, you play in the high-octane role of an ambitious racing driver, a bit like Tom Cruise in Days Of Thunder.

Providing all the old-style TOCA bits and bobs have been included in there – and they should have been – we'll be looking forward to the June 2002 release date. Codemasters has versions planned for PlayStation 2, Xbox and PC.

Yup, it's a screen from replay mode

This time they've stuck a plot in there

TEN VIDEOGAME CHARACTERS. ONE HOUSE. WHO GOES? YOU DECIDE.



Another eviction takes place

The lucky ones swap stories about what they'd do if they win

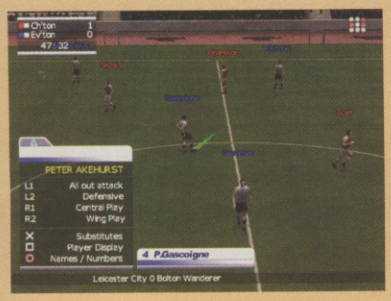
The last night party

LMA MANAGER FOR PS2

"Attack! Attack!"

If it's stats you want, how about 722 clubs, 17,000 players and 28 countries?

That's what you'll find in LMA Manager 2002 on PS2, out early next year, with an Xbox version to follow. Yup, you can now manage the likes of Real Madrid and Barcelona – in fact almost anywhere that takes your fancy.



Gascoigne and Graveson should both be bald

LMA Manager offers user-friendly stats

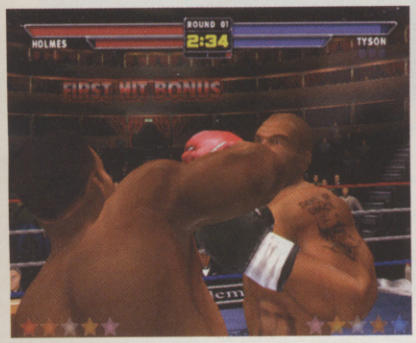
Going international isn't the only change. "It's bigger, better, deeper and louder," says Codemasters' Simon Prytherch. So expect better match replays, with commentary from Alan Hansen and Gary Lineker, and a lot more emphasis on the game, rather than screens filled with, um, stats.

"Oi, Watch The Ear!"

MIKE TYSON HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING

You've smashed, swung and pummelled your way through every other fighter in the whole of boxing. You've managed to get the bronze, silver and gold title, now all that remains for you to do is to complete the mighty Mike Tyson Challenge. Finish that and you'll be able to play as Tyson himself. Oh yes.

See, if there's one thing Mike Tyson Heavyweight Boxing's not short of, it's challenges. Due out in April 2002 on PS2 and Xbox, the game promises lots of depth, glitz and glamour, as well as a whole lotta heavyweights hitting the canvas.



The forearm smash is an under-used tactic

Pink gloves are all the rage, apparently

NEWS SHORTS

No sooner has PS2 gone down to a tidy £199 in the UK, than Sony Japan announces a drop to 29,800 yen on home turf, meaning the Japs get their PS2 for around £169.

At last, a decent mobile phone game (hopefully). Our trained games moles have dug up proof that Digital Bridges is soon to unleash Space Invaders. Bye bye Snake...

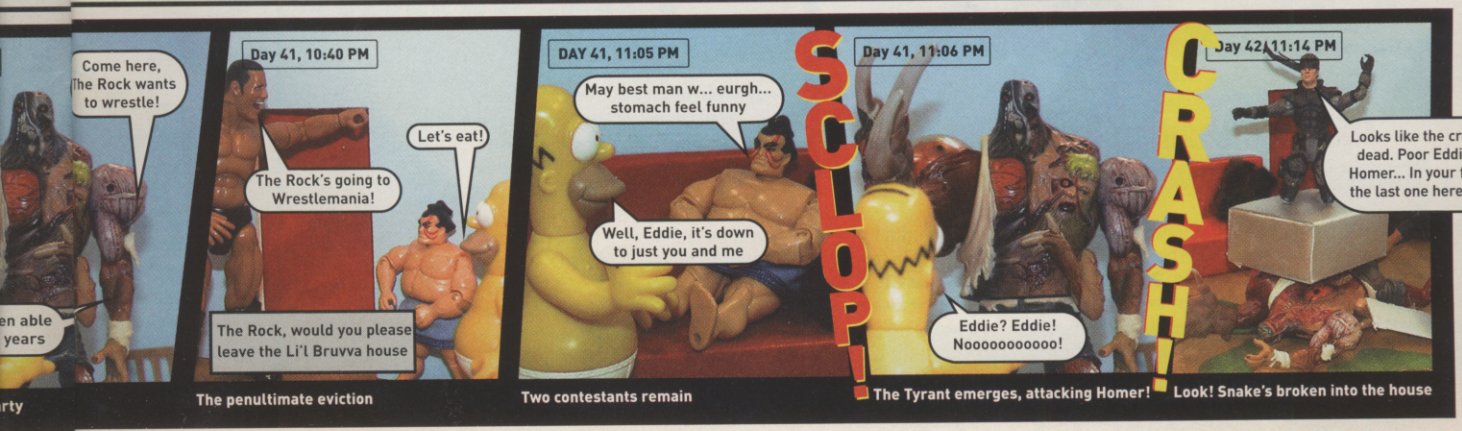
The Bitmap Bros latest project is a real-time action strategy game, called, provisionally, World War II: D-Day to Berlin.

Never say we don't shower our readers with generosity. Just last month we invited y'all to raise some blisters on Xbox's big hitters. Check your verdicts on p68. Thanks to the Big M for sorting us out.

Check out the first new pic of the game based on the new Spider-Man movie. A dark look replaces the usual comic style.

Sega Sports' NHL2K 2 and NFL2K 2 may not come to UK Xboxes, sources suggest.

The PS2 port of PC shooter No One Lives Forever has four exclusive new levels where you play a young Cate. More next ish.



The penultimate eviction | Two contestants remain | The Tyrant emerges, attacking Homer! | Look! Snake's broken into the house

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5	Pokemon Crystal	(GBC)
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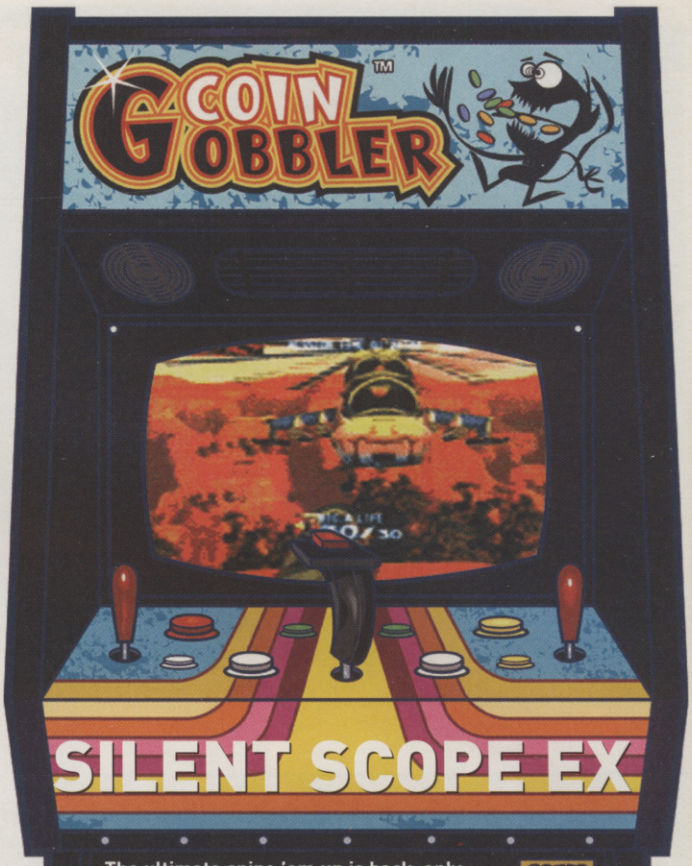


The ultimate snipe 'em up is back, only bigger, slicker and faster than ever. They've added almost an extra foot to the screen, which now weighs in at 38-inches. Size definitely matters! C&VG

New missions include moving through a steep desert gorge picking off choppers, protecting the president in a JFK-style hit scenario and sniping bad guys off a giant yacht. As well as packing in the action, the graphics have been seriously tweaked, with a bundle of sweet visual effects thrown in, like heat haze in the desert and water effects on the yacht stage.

But one of the coolest things about EX is the new 'hero shot' at the end of each level. You've only got a single round to take out the main villain, and once you pull the trigger the camera follows the bullet close-up Max Payne-style 'til it cracks a hole in the terrorist's skull. And, of course, that rifle peripheral feels great.

PR STUNTS WE LOVE

CVG 'Too Heavy' For Westlife

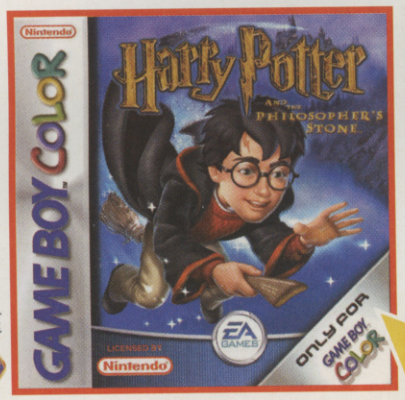
Imagine how you might react if you were told you only had a quarter of an hour left to live.

Well, that's pretty much how we felt when we were told that Westlife were releasing a game.

But, bless their Irish socks, in a bid to try and sweeten us up, everyone's mum's favourites took a photo of themselves reading our mag. Only, if you look carefully, they seem to have removed all the pages. Maybe they were too heavy, who knows? And hey, why are only two of them reading it? Still, top marks for trying. Oh, the game? It's a Westlife trivia quiz game called Fan-O-Mania. Want to know more? No?

Two out of three Westlifers prefer CVG

TOP DOG FOR CHRISTMAS



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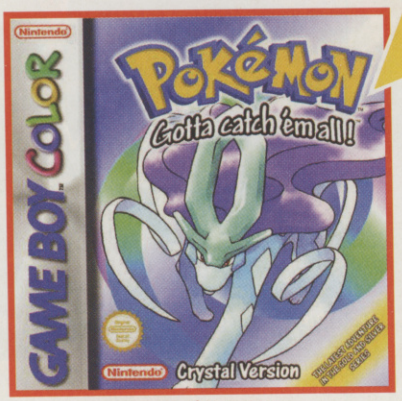

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CACKMAN

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BARE-FACED CHEEK

The game of the show we would like to see. All-Star Blankety Blank. The excitement, the tension, the motion-captured celebrities...

Okay, fastest finger first. What's the biggest-selling game of 2001? Confident? Final answer? Well, it's too early to be sure, but it's a reasonable bet that overrated PS2 pub quiz, Who Wants To Be Millionaire 2nd Edition, is in the running, all thanks to the ingenious concept of actually putting Tarrant in it this time.

Yep, last year we had to make do with an empty studio and just the voiceover talents of Tarrant to keep us company. Rumour has it the 3rd Edition will actually include the contestant too. Though that kind of power may only be possible on Xbox.

Not that Cackman is suggesting it's all some cynical ploy to get people buying the same simplistic game over and over again. Personally, I love the 'fully lip-synched' bionic Tarrant built from over 20,000 polygons. He looks so much like a scary glove puppet stitched out of human skin, that every time he talks, it's like a scene from Evil Dead. Perfect festive fun for all the family!

Besides, Tarrant is the pork crackling of the recent celebrity skin-fest we've seen in videogames. If you fancy some gristle, try chewing on cyber Anne Robinson in the aptly named The Weakest Link. Cobbled together from dodgy footage, the ginger-haired virtual gorgon makes the Tarrant-1000 look positively human. Certainly his 'lip-synched' mouth is less slopey. But that didn't stop her getting onto page three of the Daily Express.

Raising the benchmark is David Beckham in his upcoming Xbox game. Indeed, so impressive is the graphical Golden Balls, that he made the cover of The Sun just for having a joypad port in his forehead. Admittedly this is the paper that reckons Harry Potter's voice breaking is front page news, but that's beside the point. It got Cackman thinking...

If sticking a computer-rendered celebrity in your game guarantees major tabloid exposure, why go with just one? I've a hot tip for games developers looking for next year's Xmas No.1: Blankety Blank. Just think of the minor celebrity potential. John Leslie, Lorraine Kelly, Julian Clary, Dane Bowers... the possibilities are endless. Mock up an image of Dean Gaffney sporting the Xbox logo made from green zits and you may even get the front cover of the Daily Sport. Anyway, got to go. I suddenly fancy a game of Prince Naseem Boxing...

A FEW OTHER UNTAPPED GEMS

1. Craig Charles' Robot Wars (er, actually it's coming soon)
2. University Challenge with J. Pax-Man
3. Kilroy-Silk's Shafted
4. Michael Elphick's Wario Land 5
5. Lenny Bennett's Lucky Ladders

X APPEAL

It was hailed as the slickest console debut of all time, the Xbox launch in Times Square last month. Godfather of hip Bill Gates was there handing out his new toy and it was clear to see, Xbox is THE choice of only the coolest cats. Here's a picture.

US Xbox fans: the coolest cats ever?

Max Power!

FINALLY, PAYNE ON PS2

Max shows his usual restraint. You don't get up from that

Heads up, it's the first shots of Max Payne's PS2 outing, so excuse us while we come over all excited.

The original PC game was one of the better action shooters that's come our way recently. It may have been a wee bit on the short side, but it had 'bullet time' and that, brothers, made it an ace game in anyone's book. See, bullet time was an idea nicked straight out of The Matrix Book Of Good Ideas. Instead of dodging real-time bullets like in every other FPS game, you got a slowed-down wibbly-wobbly effect just like in the movie, which adds an extra dimension to the playing experience. That effect, combined with the fact that Max Payne moves like a Road Runner on a log flume, means its console debut has got to be worth keeping an eye on. When it finally gets here.

PRISONER OF WAR UPDATE

Camp It Up

Since we last had a look at Prisoner Of War for PC, Xbox and PS2, there have been some notable changes.

It's still a POW-based adventure game, but instead of the only objective being to escape, it'll be much more of a mission-based affair. As before, you'll have to get to know other prisoners and follow day-to-day patterns, but now much of the plot revolves around trying to foil a Nazi plot. Cool.

Germany: as seen on Holiday 2001

WE MAKE THIS MAG

Meet CVG

Mike Cooper, Writer

Has spent waaay too long having his 'health' boosted by hookers in his convertible. Mike's missus wasn't having any of it, so he's banned from GTA3 at home.

Les Ellis, Games Editor

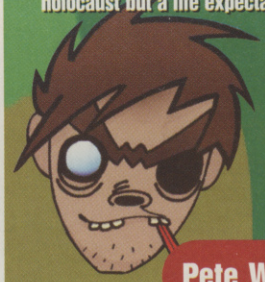
Is dead, apparently. Some lame website has been spreading rumours that the gothic guv'ner is no more, when as we've all known for years he is, in fact, undead. Like, duuuur, dudes.

Jenny McComb, Designer

Refused to cancel Les's 'Deathday' party. "He made me a cup of tea, he must be a clone and the real Les is dead," she said.

Dan Payne, Art Editor

A tough month of PR 'booze 'n' schmooze' Xmas parties for the King of Blag. Now has enough games to sit out a nuclear holocaust but a life expectancy of an hour due to renal failure.



Alex Simmons, Editor

Turned to the Dark Side while playing Rogue Leader. Cries of "Die, Luke Skywalker!" and "I've just got to unlock the level where you play as Darth Vader" were heard.

Pete Walker, Deputy Editor

Quit the evil weed. "I'll have loads more dosh for new games," he gurgled. Smashed up his PS2 and a joypad in a nicotine-deprived rage waiting for GTA3 to load.

Lee Skittrell, Senior Writer

Mr Mild revealed his lunatic alter-ego Lee Hyde when a PC company told him he'd have to wait three more weeks for his new baby. Quote: "Do you know who I *am*?!?!?"

computer and video GAMES
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Compo Carnage!

Losing finalist Robert Foxx (left) and winner Ricky Ip Wai-Hung

£2,800 worth of prize plus eight guys equals a bad case of Burnout thumb

What would you do for a 32-inch TV with surround sound system, DVD player, PS2 and a steering wheel? Well all it took CVG reader Ricky Ip Wai-Hung was a trip to Acclaim's London HQ with food and drink provided, plus the minor problem of whooping seven rivals at Burnout in our recent mega compo.

In the three best-of-three rounds, Ricky's 24 hours of practice paid off as no-one managed to beat him even once, despite one or two neck-and-neck finishes. Losing finalist Robert Foxx saw off several contenders, but fell at the final hurdle when faced with Ricky's sneaky tactics (we saw plenty of avoiding the traffic by driving off road and one or two instances of nudging opponents into cars – which of course we completely support). "I was flukey to make the final, so I wasn't surprised to lose to Ricky", he said in a moment of humble pie-eating.

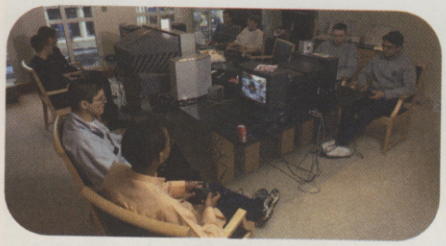
Despite claims of "not feeling confident at all" and not wanting "to tempt fate by saying I'll win", Ricky's final victory soon saw the bravado flooding back: "Yeah, I knew I could take it easy once I whooped the first opponent."

With a winning streak that included several races where he finished over a lap ahead of his opponents, Ricky has proved that he is CVG's King of Burnout. Rock on, Ricky.

Victorious Ricky shows off his latest lovebite

Like that centre-parting, the action was slick

Who could have left all those copies around?



The atmosphere was intense, nerves were on edge

Note to Pizza Hut and Coke: send in freebies, please

CRASHED AND BURNED

It was a magnificent battle of hardened gamers. Many fell by the wayside, blubbing like small children being dragged round the supermarket, but no-one left empty-handed. In a move designed to stem the flood of dejected tears, everyone who competed left with a sweatshirt and a game to remember the day they took up the CVG Challenge.

LOSING QUARTER-FINALISTS
Stuart Burnaby
James Hammond
Tejinder Randhawa
Parwiz Bashir

LOSING SEMI-FINALISTS
Edwin Jones
Tuelo Segwai

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*Receipt of purchase required and sent together with a cheque for £4.99 (8.06 Euros) **No purchase necessary
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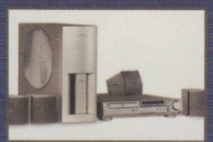

2nd Prize
Home Entertainment System

3rd Prize
Sony Micro System

Plus 250 Sony Walkman's

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FORMAT: GAMECUBE **OUT:** NOW (US) LATE 2002 (UK) **PRICE:** £70 (IMPORT) **PLAYERS:** 1 **DEVELOPER:** FA TOR

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ROGUE SQUADRON® II

All the best bits of Star Wars in one game and not even a whiff of the Ewoks...

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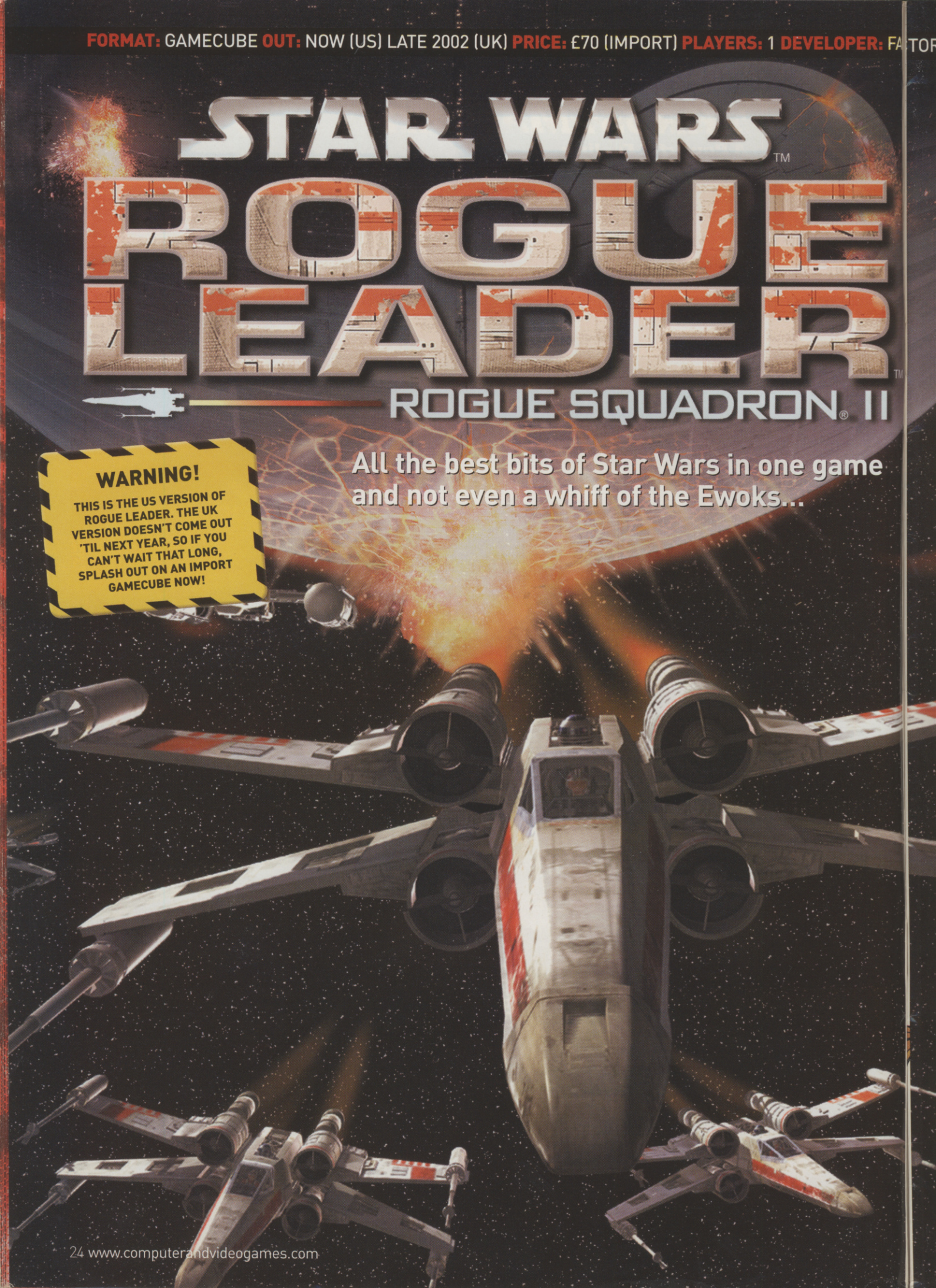
THIS IS THE US VERSION OF ROGUE LEADER. THE UK VERSION DOESN'T COME OUT 'TIL NEXT YEAR, SO IF YOU CAN'T WAIT THAT LONG, SPLASH OUT ON AN IMPORT GAMECUBE NOW!



Rogue Leader supplied by CEX. Call them on 020 7916 8440 or visit www.cex.co.uk

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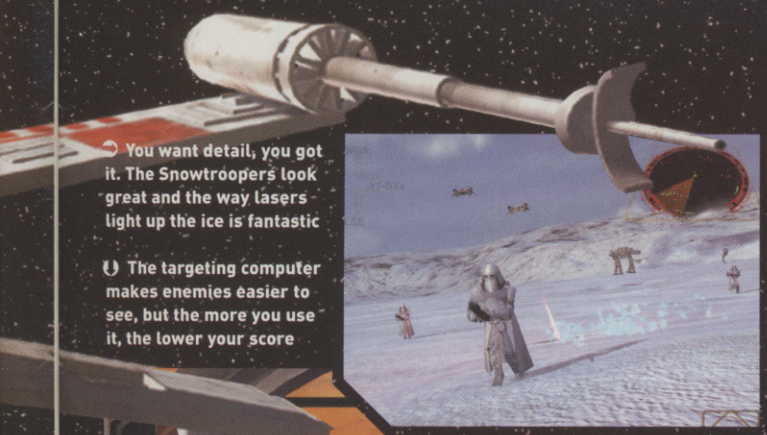
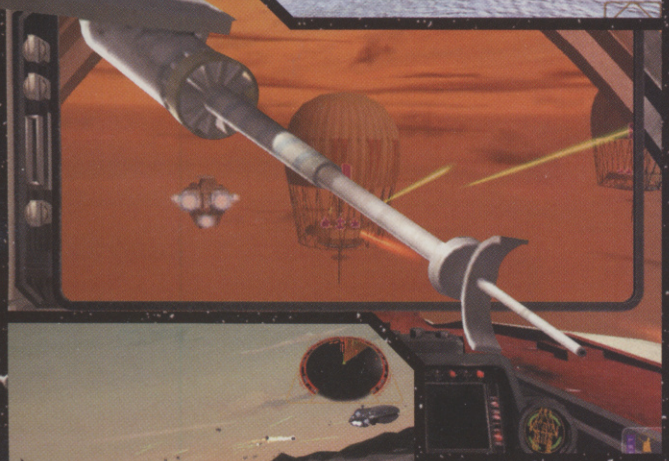
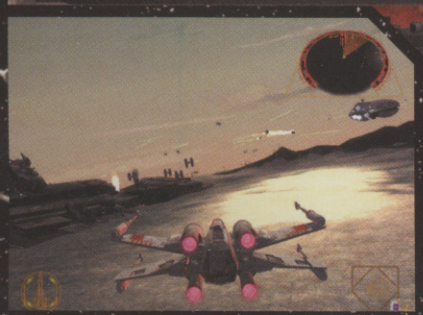


You want detail, you got it. The Snowtroopers look great and the way lasers light up the ice is fantastic

The targeting computer makes enemies easier to see, but the more you use it, the lower your score





With all these lasers cutting through the sky, you get a real sense of fighting a desperate battle

SECOND-HAND Y-WING, ONE CAREFUL OWNER

FIRST THINGS FIRST, THESE ARE THE SHIPS YOU GET TO FLY

T-16

Only available in the Tatooine training mission, this sky hopper's got twin lasers and missiles

X-WING

Fast and manoeuvrable, the X-Wing is heavily armoured and its quad lasers and proton torpedoes pack a hefty punch

Y-WING

Dead slow but it's ideal for taking out ground targets thanks to its deadly proton bomb pay-load

A-WING

Extremely fast but poorly armoured – jink like crazy to avoid enemy fire and you might survive in one of these

B-WING

The Rebellion's one-seater battleship, stuffed to bursting with lasers, ion cannons and concussion missiles

SNOWSPEEDER

Twin lasers are great for taking out AT-STs, while the tow cable is unbeatable against the AT-ATs

MILLENNIUM FALCON

The fastest hunk of junk in the galaxy is also pretty handy in a dogfight, thanks to its quad lasers and concussion missiles

TWIN POD CLOUD CAR

Light and fast, but not particularly well armoured. You'll find this little fighter waiting for you in Cloud City

IMPERIAL SHUTTLE

You steal one of these babies from an Imperial base and then get to fly it on a handful of other missions

TIE FIGHTER

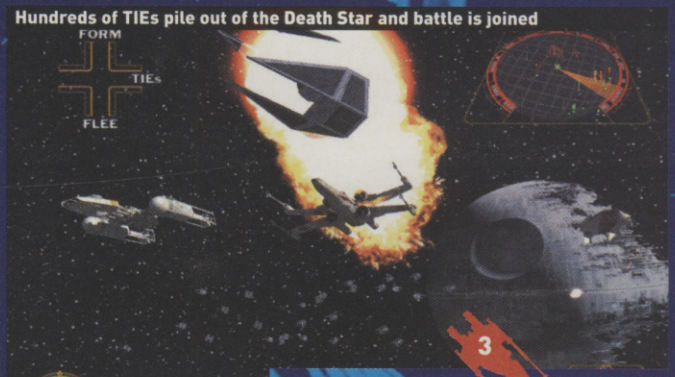
Again, you've got to nick this from an Imperial outpost before you can fly it on other missions

TIE ADVANCED

Slide inside Darth's ship by racking up 30 medal points and unlocking the secret Death Star mission

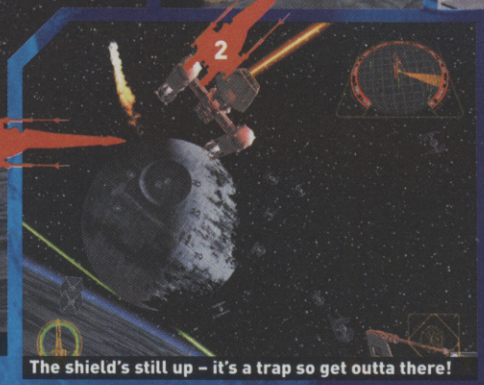
BATTLE OF ENDOR

This is the most impressive of all the missions in Rogue Leader, seeing you piloting an X-Wing in the battle above Endor from the end of Return Of The Jedi. The Rebel fleet comes out of hyperspace with the second Death Star directly in front, only to discover its shields are fully operational. Even worse, a squadron of Star Destroyers have closed in behind the Rebels, snaring them in a deadly trap. With no hope of damaging the shielded Death Star, the rebel fighters turn to face the Star Destroyers as the swarms of TIE fighters close in for the kill...

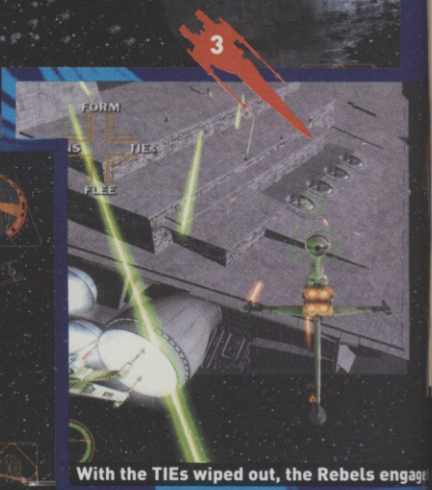


Hundreds of TIEs pile out of the Death Star and battle is joined

X-Wings follow the Millennium Falcon towards the Death Star



The shield's still up – it's a trap so get outta there!



With the TIEs wiped out, the Rebels engage

You've got to feel sorry for Artoo. Strapped to the top of your X-Wing, the dome-headed droid gets his chrome bonce scarred by laser fire, scraped along the belly of a Star Destroyer and then gets his noggin blown clean off by Darth Vader. And you thought *you* had it bad.

Thing is, without your R2 unit you wouldn't last five seconds in Rogue Leader. When you're skimming over the surface of the Death Star it's impossible to avoid the constant barrage of green neon laser fire that spits from each of the guard towers. So when your shields start to pack up, you've got to rely on your metal mate to fix them before your fighter goes up in a ball of flame.

However, no robot or even The Force can save your skinny ass if you're a sap in the cockpit, and learning to fly like Luke Skywalker is the only sure-fire way to up your survival time. And you haven't got long to practise, because screaming down the Death Star's trench is your first job. For this mission you get to slip inside Skywalker's flight suit for what is surely a near-perfect recreation of the first film's dazzling finale.

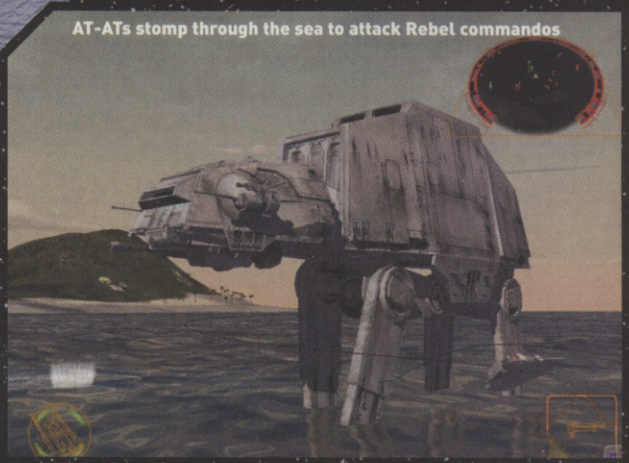
In fact it almost looks better than the movie, thanks to graphics so sharp you could cut your eyeballs on them. Space is lit up with laser fire so intense it's like watching a fireworks display. The detail is incredible too – each ship has been painstakingly recreated, right down to the Millennium Falcon's quad lasers and radar dish. The Star Destroyer is breathtaking, not just because of its detail but mainly because it's so goddamn big. When X-Wings fly over its surface it's like watching flies buzzing around a giant turd, and when you close in to take out its shield generators it fills the entire screen!

STAY ON THE LEADER

Sitting in the hotseat feels familiar if you've played Rogue Squadron on N64. The ships fly in much the same way, favouring fast arcade dogfights over flight sim tedium. The action's relentless, and seconds after climbing inside your X-Wing for the first time, TIE Fighters close in on your tail while lasers fired from turrets cut across the nose of your ship.

Luckily, flying is instinctive, allowing you to concentrate on dishing out proton death. Each ship is kitted out with laser cannons and a secondary weapon. X-Wings carry proton torpedoes to fire down the Death Star's exhaust port, Snowspeeders use a tow cable to trip up

Rogue Leader is *gorgeous* to look at, especially on the Battle Of Hoth level


AT-ATs stomp through the sea to attack Rebel commandos

A couple of proton torpedoes and the shield generator starts to spark before exploding

Finally, attack the generator on the belly of the Destroyer

...e Star Destroyers

You've got to bring their shields down with your B-Wing

Scratch one Star Destroyer! Don't stop now though, there's still another to destroy!

AT-ATs and the Y-Wing can nuke ground targets with its proton bombs.

Your ship's radar highlights enemy targets, and while pulling around to get a TIE in your sights isn't too tough, keeping them there is a different story. These babies are fast and can turn tightly, and it'll be a while before you start bagging enemy fighters like a pro.

Order your wingmen around using the Cube's Dpad

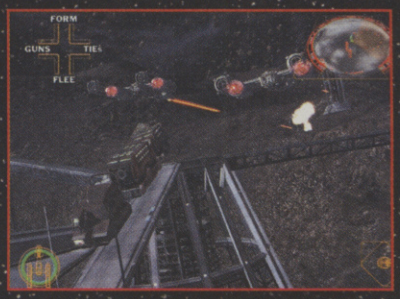
But when you do it sure is satisfying. Blast off a wing and the TIE spirals out of control, leaving a trail of smoke behind it. Get a direct hit on the cockpit and it'll explode instantly, the explosion hanging in the air just long enough to give you the pleasure of flying through it.

RED FIVE STANDING BY

There are ten missions plus one training run where you get used to the flight controls over the deserts of Tatooine. Initially you only have the choice of one craft on each mission, but more are opened up after you complete them. For instance, you can only use the X-Wing on the Death Star mission first time around, but finish it and the Y-Wing, A-Wing and B-Wing are all there when you return.

It's also possible to change ships mid-mission when you get orders to do so. On Hoth you begin in the Snowspeeder, taking out AT-STs and snowtroopers, but when TIE Bombers start tearing into Rebel transport ships, you have to switch quickly to an X-Wing by flying through a Rebel symbol floating above a spare fighter. You automatically

Use ion bombs to destroy the train



switch and seconds later you're in the air, continuing the battle.

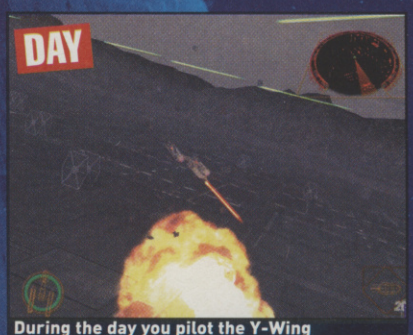
Additionally, you're accompanied by two wingmen on each mission, and you can give them orders as you please. Get them to take care of the TIEs while you focus on a Star Destroyer, or order them to guard friendly ships while you go off and take on the Empire single-handed.

I HAVE YOU NOW

Mission objectives vary from taking out shield generators to allow the Rebel fleet to pass an Imperial outpost, to

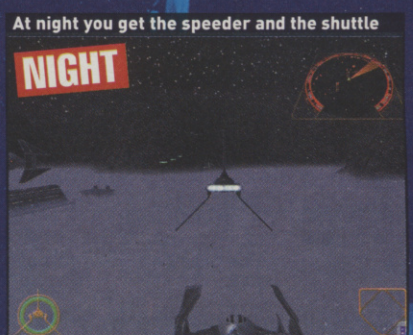
NIGHT AND DAY

The time of day that you play certain missions can affect how they pan out. Take the Imperial Heist, for example. Play during the day and you pilot a Y-Wing flying through canyons taking out sensors with its ion cannons. But tackle the same mission at night and all this dark mist has fallen in the canyon. This time you fly a Snowspeeder and must evade sensor detection rather than taking them out. How cool is that?



During the day you pilot the Y-Wing

At night you get the speeder and the shuttle



protecting poorly-armed frigates from marauding TIE Interceptors. Most are based on scenes from the movies, like the battle of Endor at the end of Return Of The Jedi, but others just use locations from the films as a battleground.

Each area looks incredible, whether it's the built-up metropolis of Cloud City or the icy wastelands of Hoth, complete with little troops fighting it out on the snow.

It moves smoothly too – well, for most of the game, anyway. The trouble is, when the screen's rammed with two Star Destroyers and a load of TIE Fighters, things start jerking around. While this slow-down doesn't really affect the game, there are times when it can mean the difference between life and death. Flying through the Death Star's core is devilishly difficult as it is, but when the X-wing starts juddering rather than turning smoothly, the chances of you getting out alive are minimal.

You are given three chances to complete each mission successfully, and you'll be rewarded with medals for your performance. Depending on the medal, you're also awarded points which, when you've collected enough, allow you to open up new levels. These secrets are very special indeed, allowing every Star Wars nut to realise the dream of playing the Death Star trench sequence as Darth Vader, taking out X-Wings as they attack. Or you can play as Han Solo as he pilots the Falcon through the asteroid field, desperately trying to escape from a Star Destroyer.

Protect the Falcon

Inside, take out TIEs

Destroy the generator!

Now quick, get out before the Death Star blows!

There's nothing new here but it does look *gorgeous*

"IT'S JUST LIKE THE MOVIE"

So, the perfect Star Wars game then? Well, it's certainly the best we've seen in a long time, but that said, it's by no means perfect. The presentation is faultless; gob-smacking graphics complemented perfectly by the musical score and sound effects taken straight from the movies. The problem lies not with how it looks, but with how it plays.

It's simple, almost too simple, and after you've finished half a dozen missions you'll find yourself thinking: "Is that it?". Unfortunately, it is. Don't get us wrong, it's an incredible game that any Star Wars fan will lap up, but being an update of an N64 game, it just doesn't do anything you haven't seen before.

CVG RECKONS

Like Jordan, Rogue Leader looks great, is nice to play with but is a touch shallow. We expected just a bit more depth. **Alex**

8

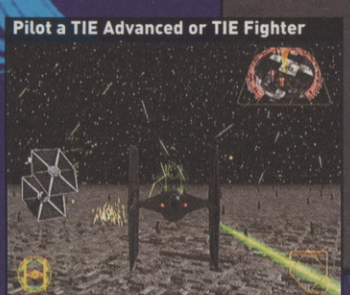
If you like this try these...
Rogue Squadron (N64, PC)

ANYONE SEEN MY INHALER?

This has to be the coolest hidden mission ever. If you collect enough medal points, you'll be given the privilege of playing as Darth Vader himself, piloting the TIE Advanced in the Death Star battle from the first movie.

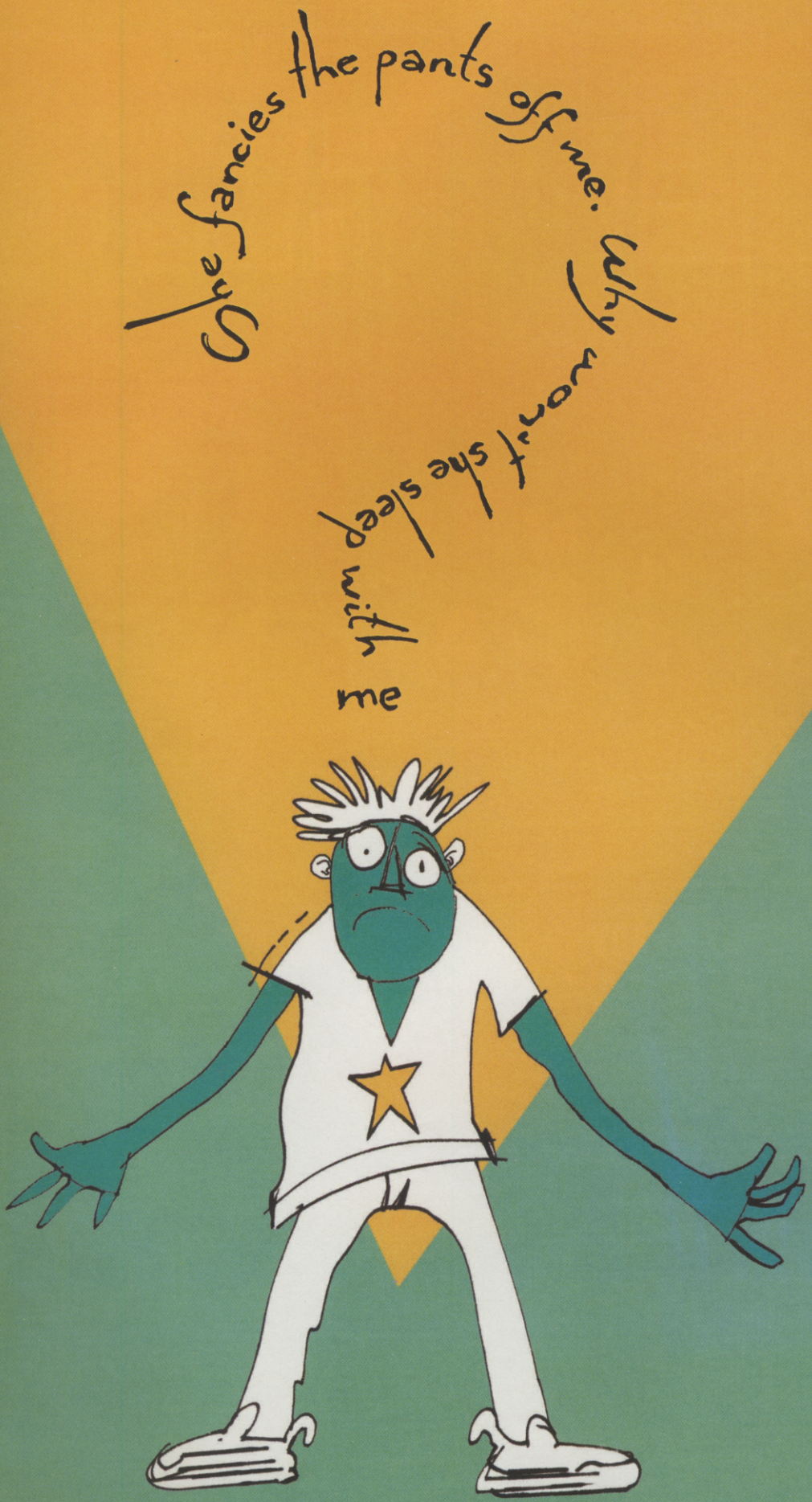
Vader wheezes as he tugs at the controls, then booms out commands to the two TIEs following his lead. It looks fantastic and feels great to move over to the Dark Side and take out all those Rebel scum.

Darth breathes heavily in cockpit view



Pilot a TIE Advanced or TIE Fighter

Earn 30 medal points and you get to play as Darth himself. It's tough to get but very cool



My girlfriend's happy to go to a movie, a club or even the football.

So why won't she go all the way?

It's a question asked by millions of horny guys every day.

The answer is probably that she's simply not ready yet.

For sex to really go off with a bang, both partners need to be completely ready, especially if it's their first time.

If one of you isn't, you're likely to ruin what should be a very special moment (or preferably several moments...)

Think about how she feels. If you think she loves you now, show her you're cool enough to wait. Chances are she'll be crazy about you then.

So if you're getting a bit het up, keep your pants on.

As they say, good things come to those who wait...

sex

Are you thinking about it enough?

If you're under 18 and need advice about sex or contraception, phone Sexwise on 0800 28 29 30 or visit us at www.ruthinking.co.uk The call is free and confidential.

Textphone (for people with hearing impairments) 0800 328 1651.

FULLY HANDS-ON SNEAK-PEEK OF THE LATEST AND HOTTEST GAMES

PREVIEWS

The cuteness and charm of the characters you meet is enough to melt even the hardest heart out there

HERDY GERDY

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **FEBRUARY** DEVELOPER: **CORE DESIGN** PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**

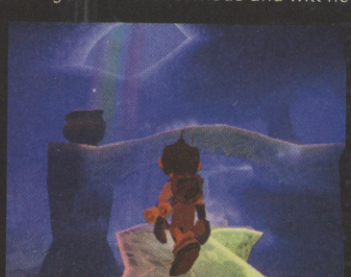
With the wind in your hair and your feet pounding the ground, you close in on your prey. There's a manic grin on your face and your teeth are clenched. You feel good, wild, like a true master of the natural world. Yep, chasing pigeons in the park is one of life's rare pleasures. Now there's a videogame that lets you fulfil all your creature-worrying, animal-herding instincts, and it's from the people who brought us Lara Croft. Yes!

SOFTEN YOUR EDGES

It's been a long time coming, but Core Design's cartoon adventure game is almost here. Herdy Gerdy started off as an N64 game and, while the gorgeous visuals and sprawling game environments are definitely PS2, the game's Nintendo roots still show. Herdy Gerdy is unashamedly cutesie and cartoony, the soundtrack is twee and jolly, and there are all sorts of items to sniff out and collect. And like the best Nintendo 3D platform adventures, the game is bursting at the seams with charm.

It looks set to be a game with pretty much everything needed to soften the hard edges of all of the so-called 'mature' PlayStation 2 games released up 'til now. Not that Herdy Gerdy is just for younger players though. The game promises to be enormous and will need a strategic brain to

Wook at the widdle Bleeps. Aww



Exploring the end of the rainbow?

100 bells per level gets a big bonus

Gromps: pink? Maybe. Vicious? Definitely

You have to explore every corner of each area to hunt down hidden critters

"No cow-tipping, but it's got everything else"

fully appreciate all the subtle nuances of herding the cute critters all over the place.

ER, HERDING?

'Strue: in Herdy Gerdy you play a young shepherd boy called Gerdy. At the start, Gerdy goes to see his father and finds that he cannot be woken up. Gerdy realises that this isn't simply a case of one too many pints of moonshine the night before, and so he sets off to find out who's responsible for his dad's eternal slumber.

It soon turns out that the wicked Sadorf – the Bond villain of the shepherding world – has not only put Gerdy's dad into a deep sleep but plans to ruin the world by blagging a magic power-giving acorn too. The acorn is only given to the winner of a shepherding tournament held once every five years. Gerdy plans to thwart Sadorf and save his dad by entering the championship and winning the acorn for himself. It's all ridiculous of course, but the herding premise allows for some superbly original and surprisingly complex gameplay.

DOOP, BLEEP, GROMP

There are 12 types of creature to learn how to command in the game. At the start you herd creatures by hurling yourself at them full pelt, hoping they run from you in the right direction.

As you play through, you'll win useful items that let you command the critters with a bit more finesse. Different types of creature, however, respond differently to the various herding items. Bleeps (l'il purple pointy-eared dudes), for example, love the sound of the flute and will follow you while you play, but the herding horn will have them run away scared.

The animals react differently to other groups of creatures too. Honks hate Grimps, Doops and Clucks keep a safe distance from each other and Gromps will chase and eat any creature they clap eyes on, including Gerdy. Learning all of the subtle relationships and the way the animals respond to different techniques is key to herding the number needed to clear each area.

We've played Herdy Gerdy loads and barely scratched its surface. New areas open up as you play and as you gain new items you can return to previous levels for fresh challenges. So save up the Christmas

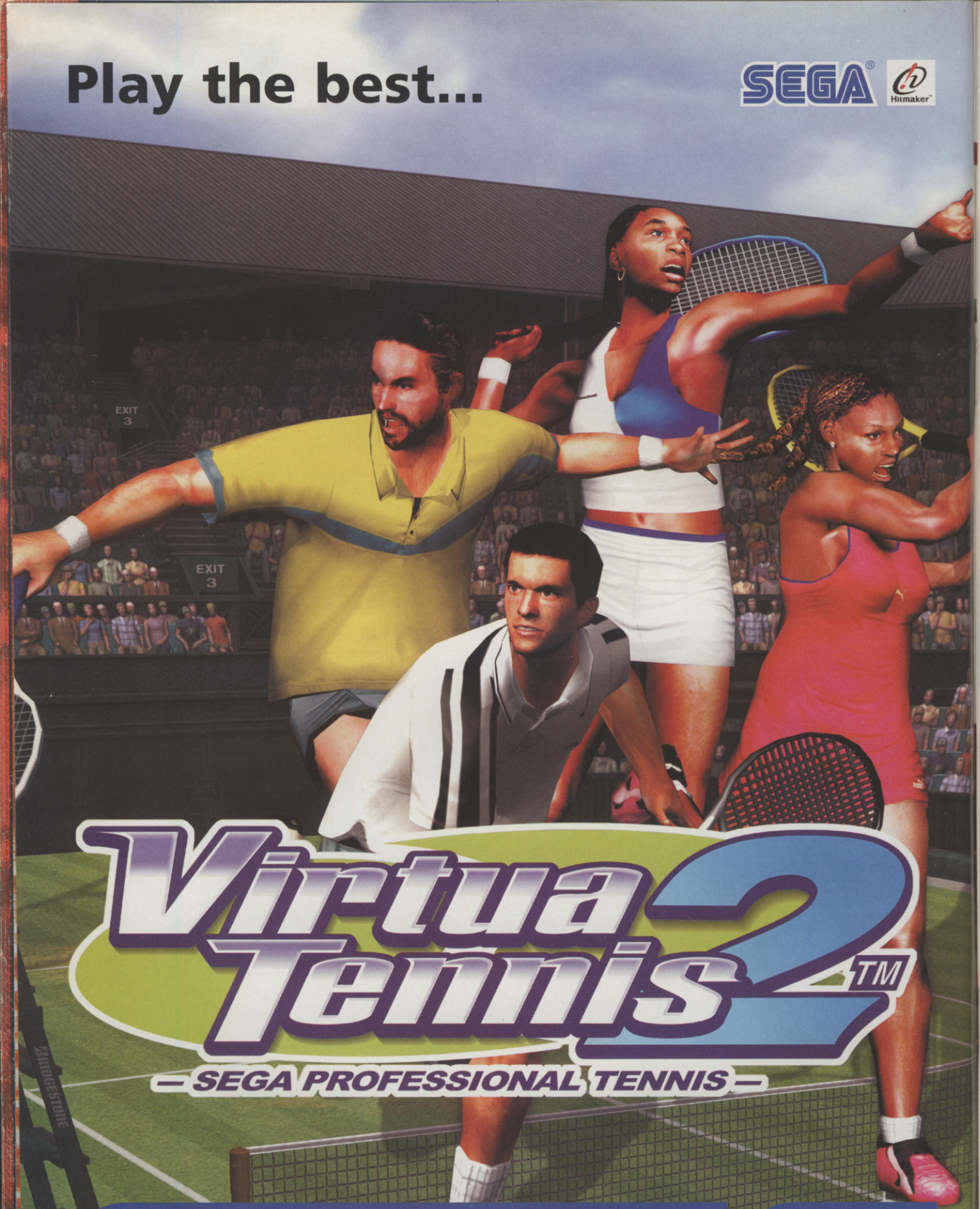
Once you get chatting, this wee cutie will help you out

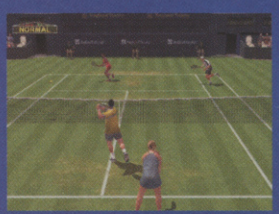
CVG RECKONS

It's highly original (herding, anyone?), extremely clever and packs a massive gaming challenge. Herdy's cartoon graphics are pretty gorgeous too. Lee

Play the best...

SEGA® Hitmaker™





Dreamcast.

Original Game © SEGA, © Hitmaker / SEGA 2001

ACE COMBAT: DISTANT THUNDER

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **FEBRUARY 1** DEVELOPER: **NAMCO** PUBLISHER: **SONY**

Use the HUD to track enemy fighters

Obviously a flight combat game with real aircraft and bombings is extremely controversial these days, which is why Ace Combat is no longer set on Earth. Instead you fight over a continent called *Usea*, against an enemy called the E*rusians*. Sound familiar? Probably did to the script writer, too.

Luckily the storyline's not important here, but what makes this cool is the feeling of satisfaction you get after stuffing a missile up an enemy's tailpipe – hunt 'em down, lock on and then blow the suckers out of the sky.

Most of the dogfighting is done from a distance, but real pros should try to perfect the machinegun kill. It's not easy, sticking to an enemy's six as they weave and roll through the sky, but it feels *so* good when lead death rips their plane apart. It's also a skill you'll rely on when missiles run dry.

Missions come in thick and fast, with a combination of air and ground targets taking the full impact of your missiles. There are loads of aircraft to pilot, accessed by earning cash from performing well during the missions, and each has a choice of payloads to suit different needs. The A-10 is slow but carries missiles that can take out up to six ground targets simultaneously, while the advanced F-15 is unbeatable in the air.

The main advance over PSone Ace Combat is obviously the graphics – this puppy looks sharp as nails, and the landscapes and aircraft look incredibly detailed. It moves smoothly too, and is fast enough to keep the adrenalin flowing.

It strikes a perfect balance between action and sim, giving you complete control over the fighter without over-complicating the gameplay with wing-flaps and undercarriage. There's also a split-screen two-player mode, with one-on-one dogfights and training missions to tuck into. Just choose a plane, its weapons and get it on!

Bomb the air base

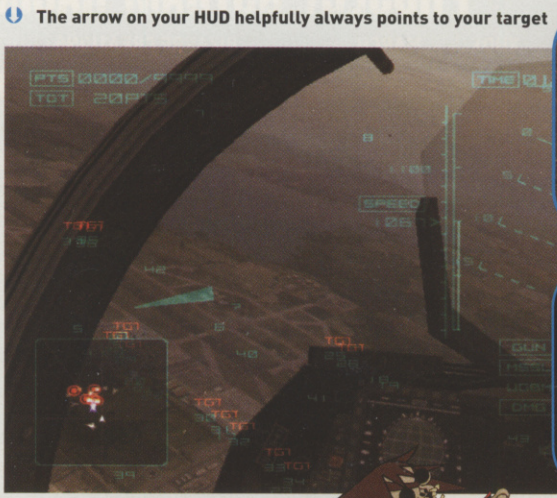
Blue sky, hidden danger

Not at all like Russia, no

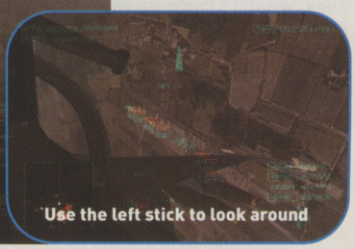
The Eurofighter may not be in active service, but here it's a demon

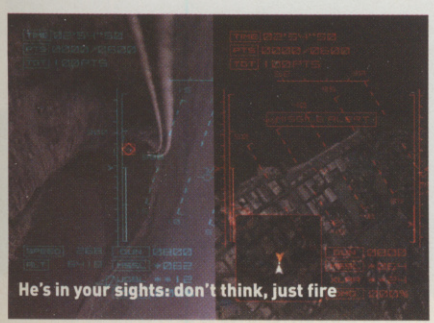
"Line 'em up and shoot 'em right back down"

The arrow on your HUD helpfully always points to your target



The replays look well tasty


Use the left stick to look around

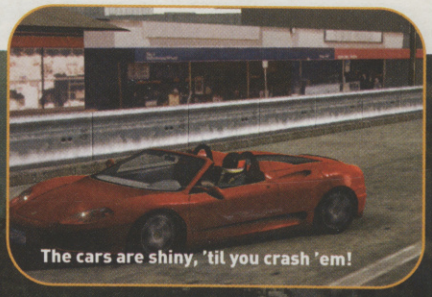

He's in your sights: don't think, just fire

CVG RECKONS

Fast, good looking and a whole lot of fun, Namco's next gen flight-and-fight blast is shaping up to shoot the likes of Top Gun down in flames. Les

Ground detail looks great from up here

Fast, flashy and a lot of fun


The cars are shiny, 'til you crash 'em!

London's burning... rubber

With the inside route cut off, overtaking round a corner on the outside is tricky. You'll try it anyway if you want those kudos points

PROJECT GOTHAM RACING

FORMAT: **XBOX** OUT: **MARCH** DEVELOPER: **BIZARRE CREATIONS** PUBLISHER: **MICROSOFT**

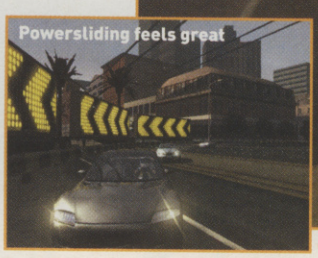
Remember Metropolis Street Racer on Dreamcast? If not, go and see a doctor about your terrible memory. It was released a year ago and was one of the console's biggest games. And developer Bizarre Creations has spent the last 12 months reworking the title for Xbox. What it's come up with is Project Gotham Racing, and already it's looking mint.

Like MSR, Project Gotham's races are set around the deserted streets of the world's biggest cities. London, San Francisco and Tokyo are all here, along with New York, and each boasts big maps crammed with loads of detail. And because there are entire chunks of city to drive through, you get over 200 different circuits to prove your driving mettle on.

The car line-up is almost as impressive as Gran Turismo 3's, with the new Mini Cooper, Porsche Boxster, VW Beetle, Nissan Skyline and Ferrari F-355 all ready to leave the garage

Carnage on the streets of America, as each driver tries to get the inside line

Wait for the green...


Powersliding feels great

These motors take real damage

Hmm, Houses of Parliament or Westminster Abbey? Pass the A-Z

The architecture looks spot on

Just another day in the CVG car-park. Er, scooters at the back lads

"Burn around London trashing a Ferrari? Yeah!"

and, just like the cities, they look detailed and extremely realistic.

But what Gotham does differently is the damage. Normally car manufacturers don't allow their babies to get bashed up in games, but here you can drive a mega-expensive sports car into a wall at 50mph and watch as the bonnet crumples like tinfoil. It doesn't affect the car's handling or make it more difficult to play though, as the damage is just for show.

LET'S ROCK

Gotham's slick presentation is complimented perfectly by the grumbling sound effects. All the real engines have been recorded so your beast roars just like it should. And, providing the engine growl isn't too loud, there are some great tunes to listen to on your in-car radio.

Each of the four cities has its own bunch of radio stations to tune into, each with real-life DJs introducing tunes and chatting away. In London, for example, you can tune into Capital FM and hear Simon 'Schoolboy' Phillips playing pop hits. In Tokyo, check out some of the latest Japanese rock sounds.

There are more than 60 tunes in all, including songs from rock god Iggy Pop, The Chemical Brothers, Stereo MCs, David Lee Roth, and loads of Japanese bands most of us have never heard of. A nice touch though.

Yes, paintwork gleems in the sun. Get over it

You don't get kudos for slowing to window shop

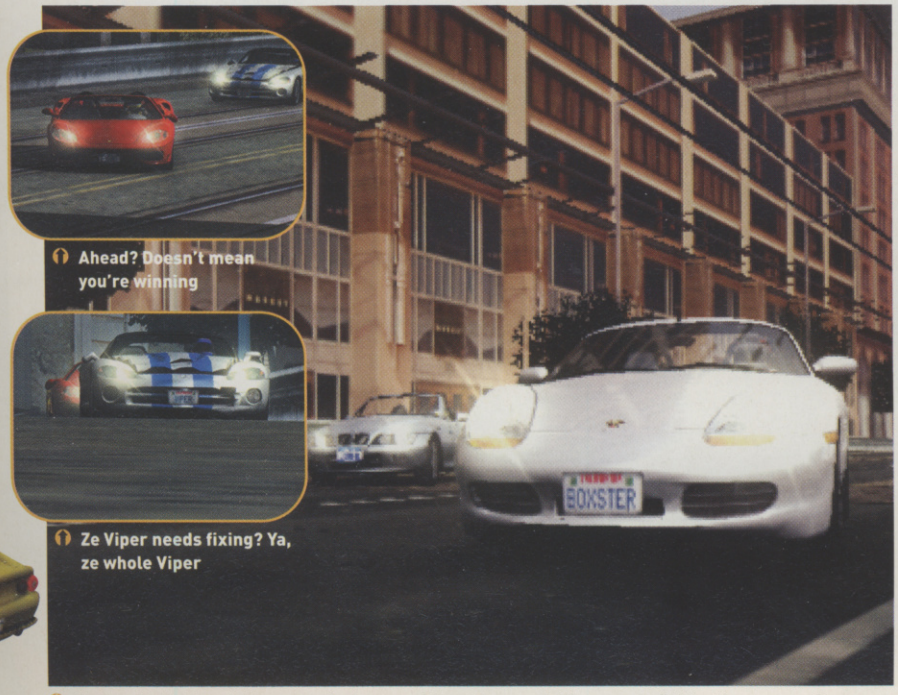
IS THIS COOL?

The idea of Project Gotham Racing is, as in MSR, to earn Kudos while racing by driving with as much style as possible, not just speed.

The Kudos scoring system works like an arcade game, with scores flashing up in the corner of the screen as you show off your mad skill behind the wheel. Powerslides earn loads of points if you can hold them for long enough, and flipping the car onto two wheels awards a massive bonus – if you can pull it off.

The coolest part, though, is that you can link tricks together to make Kudos Combos for even more points! In multiplayer races, Kudos means the first person to cross the finish line isn't always the winner – drive slowly but in style and you could snatch the cup from someone who's fast but dull to watch.

Multiplayer is another area which is well looked after here. Up to four people can race in the split-screen mode, and all with hardly any detail being taken out. The frame-rate drops a bit, but the action's still as fast and hectic as hell, meaning Gotham could turn out to be one of Xbox's first big four-player games, as well as a challenging one-player thrill-drive.



Ahead? Doesn't mean you're winning

Ze Viper needs fixing? Ya, ze whole Viper

Just as Sonic thought he was safe, Les saw him and veered off course to flatten the poor sucker

CVG RECKONS

Should be even better than Metropolis Street Racer. All the rubbish has been cut out and Project Gotham Racing already feels a lot more fun for it. **Ed**

"Futuristic Formula 1 with homing missiles"

You want steep hills and corkscrews? You got 'em

Wipeout was the game that first made the PlayStation cool. Razor-sharp visuals, cutting-edge design and gameplay that left the racing genre for dead. Club culture, not to mention club music, brought right into your bedroom. It had a huge impact first time round, something Sony is hoping to repeat on PS2.

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER?

But with just a few weeks left in development, Wipeout seems to have returned to the days of those early PS2 games that looked like shiny, hurriedly ported across PSone efforts. Far worse, though, is that Wipeout has lost its trademark sense of breathtaking speed.

As you pull Gs, throwing your ship into high-speed turns, corkscrews and jumps, gone is that feeling of corners flying at you and scenery just a blur of colour and texture that made you physically weave left and right on your sofa. The airbrakes no longer feel so important for safe cornering and being hit by enemy missiles doesn't seem so punishing on your speed. Even the track design conspires to make it feel strangely slow compared with PSone.

Weapons still play a big part (if you can't overtake, blow 'em away), but the missiles and guns aren't the explosion of effects we hoped for, although the Quake power-up *is* impressive as it rolls up the track, trashing all in its path.

WIPEOUT FUSION

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **TBC** DEVELOPER: **SONY** PUBLISHER: **SONY**

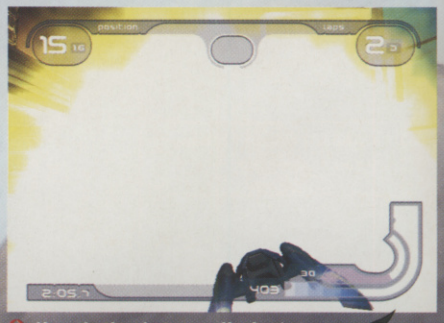
Split routes – harder has more pick-ups

The arrows on the circuits are speed boosts

Dust will have you flying blindly into a rock as you go off-road

At least piloting one of the distinctive craft used by league teams gives you plenty of racing options. Championship, Practice, Time Trial and multiplayer modes ensure there's no mix of track and vehicle that you can't explore. Furthermore, success in one league also lets you play different teams, leagues and tracks.

So, while work isn't finished yet, Fusion clearly has some way to go to live up to its prequels, and so many delays (it was originally meant to be a PS2 launch game) is ominous.



Now that's what we call wipeout

A slight knock from a rival and your shields could be fried

CVG RECKONS

Could the king of future racers be about to lose its crown? Find out in next issue's review. Les

The bosses shouldn't pose too much of a challenge for any hardened shooter freak

The effects of a seriously potent vindaloo curry

Meet Mr Stretchy. He may be slow, but that long arm will shoot out and scratch you across the face

"It'll shock you, but with the wrong kind of fright"

RESIDENT EVIL SURVIVOR 2 CODE: VERONICA

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **FEBRUARY 2002** DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM** PUBLISHER: **CAPCOM**

There aren't going to be any more Resident Evil survival horror adventures on PS2 in the foreseeable future as a result of Nintendo's awesome exclusive deal with Capcom. But how come Survivor 2 slipped through the net and is going to appear on Sony's black box of tricks? CVG reckons Nintendo took one look at it and said to Capcom, "Cheers anyway, but you can keep hold of that one. Then again, why don't you give it to Sony? Ha, ha!"

OFF THE RAILS

Time Crisis 2 has set the standard for gun games with its inventive bullet-blazing set pieces and intense eye-watering action. But one of the biggest complaints made by gun game nuts remains in place: that most such games are on-rails, resulting in a lack of flexibility. In an attempt to solve this problem, enter stage left Survivor 2, which lets you move your character 'freely' through some of the famous areas in CODE: Veronica. Problem is, the environments are so claustrophobic and the stages are so short that you never really feel like you're free to go anywhere. Factor in the fact that the controls are as cumbersome and clumsy as an elephant in a coffee shop and you start to get the picture.

You can play as one of several characters, but disappointingly there's no two-player option

Blood, yes, but not enough tension

The carnage begins in the prison

Scary? Not very

TERROR NOT INCLUDED

Resi games are all about chilling atmosphere and sudden frights, but this being a gun game there's a constant onslaught of gunky dead dudes coming at you, which eliminates the kind of tension we're all used to. However, though the suspense is lacking, there's loads of blood and guts, and the monsters look on a par with the nasties that made House of the Dead 2 on DC such a good laugh. But sadly it'll take more than a half-decent set of visuals to win us over.

CVG RECKONS

Survivor 2 has plenty of guts and gore, but the painfully awkward control system and lack of atmosphere do not bode well. **Mike**

ODDWORLD: MUNCH'S ODDYSEE

FORMAT: **XBOX** OUT: **MARCH** DEVELOPER: **ODDWORLD INHABITANTS** PUBLISHER: **MICROSOFT**

Don't make a sound.

Avoid the lasers, Abe!

Munch's sonar lets him take control of giant machines like this brutal Snoozer, which stuns enemies

We all love a saga. Star Wars, Harry Potter, EastEnders... anything that drags on and on with no end in sight and full of plenty of potential for spin-off, money-making cash-cows is alright by us. They're alright by developer Oddworld too, it seems, as the company has already announced there will be five major Oddworld games about five different characters, each one having its own sub-stories and spin-off games. Together, they create the ultimate, all-encompassing Oddworld experience. Be afraid.

Munch's Oddysee is the third Oddworld game to date, but only the second in the Oddworld quintet. It's had a chequered development history, starting life on PC, then PS2, and now finally seeing the light of day on Xbox. Munch's is also the game that zaps the series into full 3D. With this in mind, and the introduction of another playable character, it's not quite the Oddworld you might remember fondly from Abe's days of 32-bit glory.

A NEW WORLD

The two key differences between this and Abe's past solo adventures are the glorious 3D environments and the way you now have to control both Abe and Munch, using their individual skills to solve the puzzles. Abe can possess his enemies by chanting (which is

Spooce plants act like money here

Lush visuals and fancy effects shine

Drop Munch in the water and he's a speed demon. He can jump higher out of th

IT'S AN ODD WORLD AFTER ALL

We asked Oddworld CEO Sherry McKenna and President Lorne Lanning about their Xbox baby. They spoke of the power of Xbox and the vision they share for the future of Oddworld.

THE POWER OF ONE

Sherry and Lorne reckon that Xbox is currently the only machine with enough oomph to create the Oddworld experience of their dreams.

"Working with PS2 was frankly depressing," said Lorne, "but we took a look at Xbox... and it was like, 'Yeah we can work with this!'" The Xbox hardware lets programmers automatically do things that you'd otherwise have to labour over on PS2, writing into the software. Things like having loads of characters on screen at once and smoothing over edges with full-screen anti-aliasing.

Oddworld Inhabitants is already working on the sequel to Munch's Oddysee, so what of online play? "When it comes to online," said Sherry, "the next game's not going to be, but probably the one after that will be... I know it's always been part of [Lorne's] plan."

Oddworld is here to stay it seems, and sometime soon we'll be able to visit via our modems. Cool.

Yikes! Who'd want to work here?

The game starts with lab rat Munch having his new sonar implant tested

Make friends with Fuzzles and Mudokons to batter these Sligs and escape

"It's dark, twisted and cool – Munch on this!"

er out

of the water, too – perfect for surprising Sligs

Munch burps, Abe farts. Nice

Fiery platform-jumping action!

These vending machines provide useful pick-me-ups like speed or health – get them all

So many characters on screen – Xbox rules!

blatantly the skill we'd most like to have in real-life). Imagine a whole room full of evil, armed Sligs with orders to shoot poor stitch-lipped Abe on sight. With just a little mystic mumbo jumbo you've taken control of one of these Sligs and can pick off the rest with their own weaponry!

Abe can also use simple vocal commands to get his fellow Mudokons to operate machinery or attack enemies.

Munch isn't much good on foot but drop him in a wheelchair or in the drink and he's the fastest thing in the game. His brain is also fitted with a sonar implant which he uses to fry bad guys and rescue imprisoned Fuzzle creatures dotted around. The Fuzzles then follow Munch around, while the freed Mudokons latch onto Abe.

Like Abe and Munch, different followers have different skills and learning when to get them to attack and when to make them work is often key.

REPEAT PRESCRIPTION

Playing Munch's is a laugh. The puzzles are interesting if not hugely original, graphics are slick and special effects, like neat shimmering water, are cool. But our biggest concern is the action risks becoming too repetitive (and not in a fun way). Gameplay in the massive early stages consists of working out how to rescue an imprisoned critter, or opening a doorway to a new section, then repeating that same puzzle sequence to get your buddies through.

Soon feelings of satisfaction at finishing quirky tasks are replaced with a suspicion that someone ran out of ideas, so levels have been padded out instead. Just a bit worrying.

CVG RECKONS

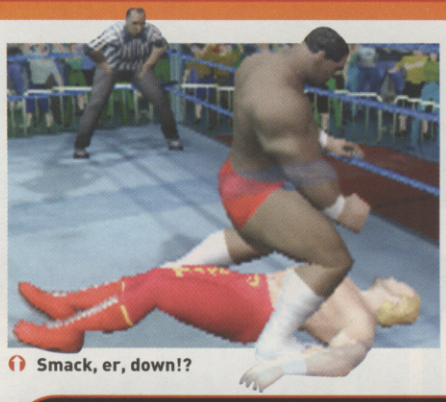
Hopefully the flashes of dark humour and impressive visuals will be enough to make players forgive gameplay that is in danger of being a touch too repetitive at times. Lee

"Wrestlers don't die – they just keep on kickin' ass!"

If your grandpa assaulted his mates with a chair, or put granny in traction during a row, you'd be scared, wouldn't you? But put old people fighting in a game, and it's a recipe for intense action. No, honestly.

Well, that's what Legends Of Wrestling is all about. Acclaim has created a game that puts together all of the dust-gathering latter-day heroes of wrestling. WWF SmackDown! Just Bring It may have most of the current WWF wrestlers, but that still leaves a hell of a lot of older guys who are still famous.

The biggest name of all is Hulk Hogan, star of amazing bouts and appalling '90s movies like Suburban Commando. But LOW also includes Jimmy 'Superfly' Snuka, the Road Warriors Animal and Hawk, Bret 'The Hitman' Hart, and Jerry 'The King' Lawler. Interested yet?



Smack, er, down!?

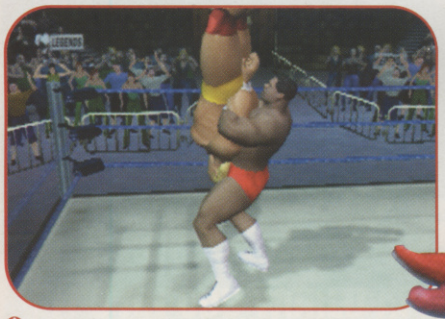
This created wrestler looks somehow familiar

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **FEBRUARY 15** DEVELOPER: **ACCLAIM** PUBLISHER: **ACCLAIM**

WELL I'LL BE DAM-MED

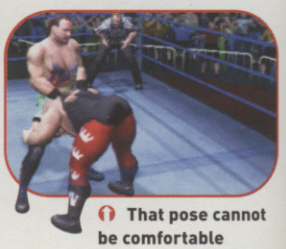
As an added bonus, it's got the current biggest star in the WWF, ex-ECW phenomenon Rob Van Dam. Because of all the licensing problems with using ECW wrestlers, he's not in WWF SmackDown! Just Bring It. You'll only find him here, using his trademark Five Star Frog Splash.



The two-man pyramid project wasn't going well

Hulk watches as the Road Warriors get into a tiff

Our main man Van Dam

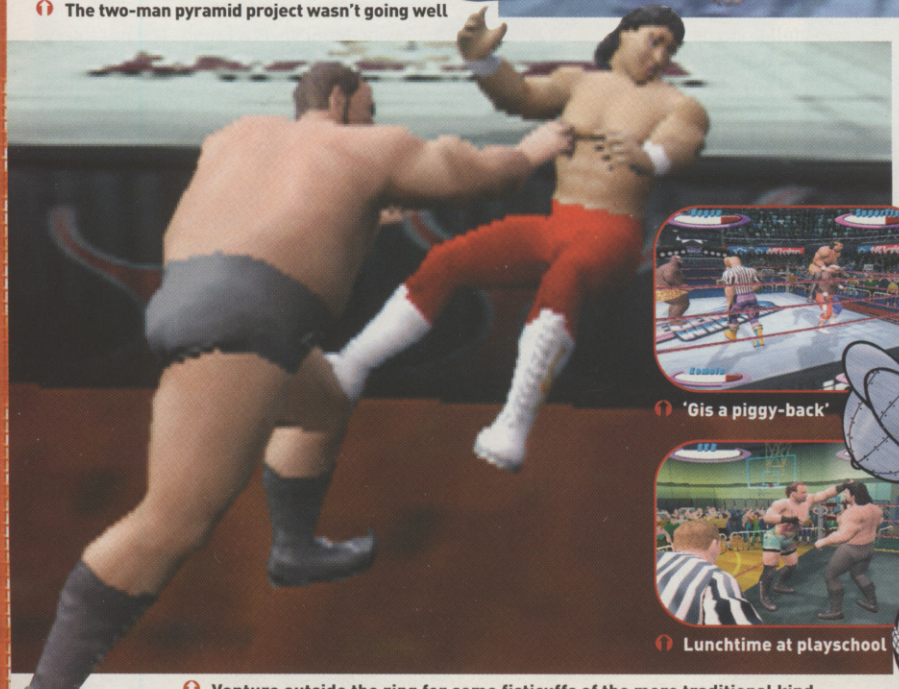


That pose cannot be comfortable

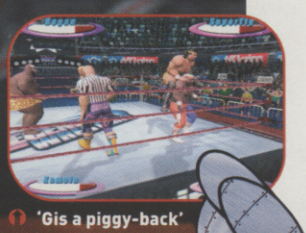
Plus there's another 30 or so famous names that LOW has recreated in their prime, eliminating the worry of having to watch a bunch of geriatric grapplers stumble around the ring trying to keep their teeth in and bowels in check.

BUS-PASS BAD-ASSES

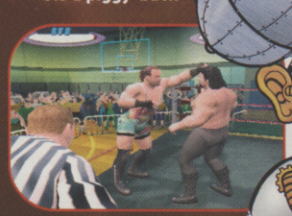
Just like in SmackDown!, winning fights won't be rocket science. There's a fluid control system and lots of button-mashing to pull off your favourite moves. Having up to four men in the ring means you can create all manner of fantasy bouts, too, and there's even a great create-a-wrestler mode as well, full of the customisation options we've come to expect. Which just leaves one question: SmackDown!'s already made PS2 its yard, so is there room in the ring two?



Venture outside the ring for some fisticuffs of the more traditional kind



'Gis a piggy-back'



Lunchtime at playschool

CVG RECKONS

Don't underestimate these old codgers – Legends promises some ace wrestling action. Joff

ENDGAME

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **FEBRUARY** DEVELOPER: **CUNNING DEVELOPMENTS** PUBLISHER: **EMPIRE**

You've played Time Crisis 2 to the finish and you're wondering what the hell you can do with the lightgun that came in that £50 bundle. You'll get stuff-all for it secondhand, it makes a crap doorstop, and you're feeling that specialist add-ons are a rip-off.

Well, you'd better pick it up and dust it off right now because this month we've seen two more lightgun games heading for PS2: first Res Evil Survivor 2 and now Endgame.

GAME OVER

You play the athletically-built Jade and the game kicks off in your apartment, where a bunch of terrorists have kidnapped your boyfriend. Within a few seconds of them appearing, your place looks like the morning after a wild, carnage-ridden party as furniture, bowls of fruit and pictures get blown all over the place while you gun down the trespassers.

The game moves on to the London Underground, with you dodging through a station to reach a train which amazingly is both on time and not full of passengers – though there are plenty of terrorists to kill.

The sixteen levels progress through the Channel Tunnel and across Europe, before breaking into a kind of Matrix-style virtual world. However, one constant, like in Time Crisis 2, is the persistent need to dodge and reload as you take on different types of thug who have varying intelligence and weapons.

For its debut PS2 title, developer Cunning has gone for a cool movie-style feel. But it's had to make a pretty big sacrifice to keep the one-player game as action-packed as possible: there's no multiplayer, and considering standard-setting TC2 had it, that's officially a lightgun crime now.

ADVANTAGE ENDGAME?

Endgame has a headstart in that anyone who bought TC2 will now be wanting something other than their younger brother to point their new lightgun at. But these days we've come to rely on extras like multiplayer modes to add longevity and make us feel we've had value for money. So while Cunning is looking at including an alternative mode for one-player, will it be enough?

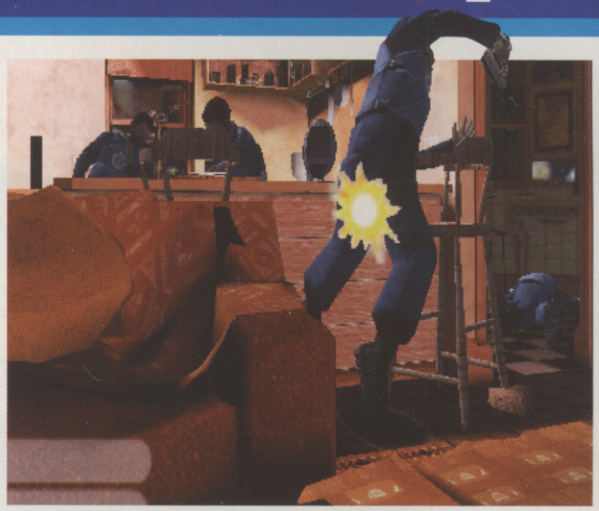
New forms of punishment for fare-dodging were deemed a tad too extreme

Crotch shots seem to be a favourite at CVG Towers – guaranteed to make you wince

"A cinematic, all-action lightgun shoot 'em up"

You wouldn't would you

Professor Krap's Flame Retardant Pants ™ were popular on the Victoria Line



'Light the fart' tricks always got a laugh on terrorist pub crawls

All this Tube is missing is the piss-stained tramp in the corner

Long range duels need top accuracy

CVG RECKONS

Endgame may not have a two-player mode, but the movie effects and cool locations split over real and virtual worlds still make this fun to play. Unlikely to threaten TC2 though. Les

Fancy effects and frantic action, that's our Max for you

The first boss, Ghastly Gus, gets medieval on Maximo's bare butt

MAXIMO: GHOSTS TO GLORY

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **FEBRUARY** DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM** PUBLISHER: **CAPCOM**

The darkness plays its icy hands over your naked flesh, goose bumps dancing a mini-Mexican wave across your back. Squelching, rancid mud oozes between your hairy toes and the ground is shaking beneath your feet. Your sword is the only way of keeping the creatures of the Underworld at bay, while the stripy comedy boxer shorts you're wearing are your only defence.

You know there's evil out there, you know the unspeakable creatures are vicious and, without armour, you don't stand a chance. But this isn't one of Les's 'special' midnight gatherings down the local graveyard, it's Maximo, a 3D revamp of the classic Ghosts 'n' Goblins series so many veteran joypad junkies cut their gaming teeth on. Get in.

Hit graves and lamps for hidden coins and gems

The bad guys approach from all sides – check out the crazy skellies

Maximo runs from this guy's feet of doom!

RUBBER DUCKIE

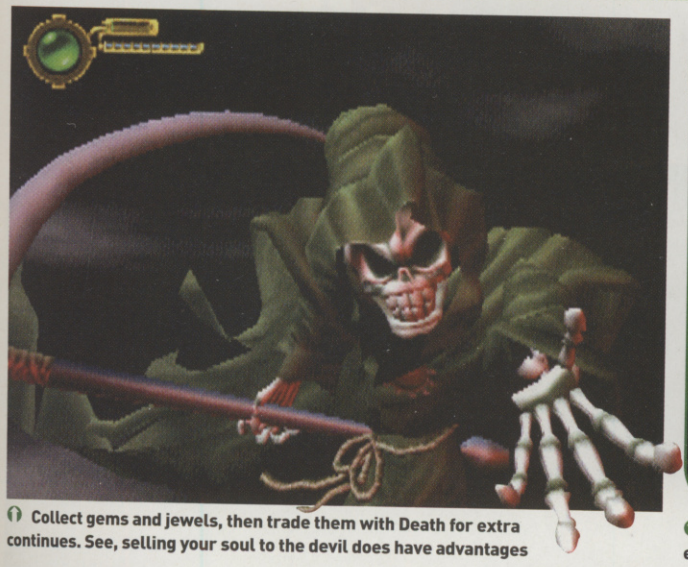
The classic 2D side-scrolling Ghosts games are retro heaven and have been crying out for an update ever since games went 3D.

The basic idea of these was to leg it from one end of a spooky level to the other, firing projectile weapons like lances and fireballs and avoiding getting twatted by the endless procession of skeletons, demons and ghosts intent on sticking hot pokers into your squashy bits. The gameplay across all the various versions was crushingly difficult but somehow we all came back for more.

Your hero Arthur got stripped down from chunky metal armour to his underpants when he took a hit, and every now and then he'd get turned into a cute but vulnerable li'l duckie by random wizards who sprang from treasure chests. Yes, it was all good, and thankfully almost everything has made it into the PlayStation 2 version.

Collect suits of armour to protect Max

"Smack up skellies and own the Underworld!"



Collect gems and jewels, then trade them with Death for extra continues. See, selling your soul to the devil does have advantages

The explosions of light when you bash up bad guys are tasty, but not all enemies are easy to kill. The downward thrust is the ideal finishing move

ACHILLE'S A HEEL

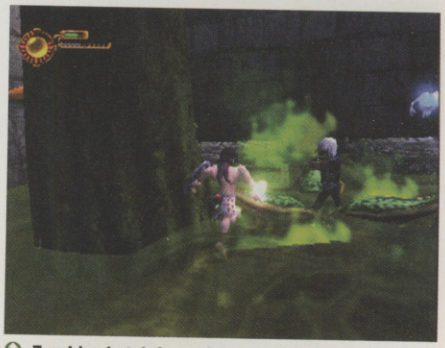
Okay, so the story is different: instead of a knight called Arthur it's you who now takes control of Maximo. Max is a sort of Roman gladiator who cuts a deal with the Angel of Death to let him get revenge on Achille – the guy who murdered Maximo and made off with his bird. Meanwhile, Achille is raising all the creatures of the Underworld and changing the landscape of the world with, er, a giant drill. So it's up to Max and you to tackle Achille's undead army and get the girl.

As far as design is concerned, Maximo is much like any other 3D platformer. The game is split into linear levels that form part of a hub. Complete all the stages in one area and a boss character comes at you with a lust for your blood. Beat the boss and it's on to the next hub.

The levels themselves are pretty simple too, with the standard collectable items and bonuses, secrets to sniff out and very few puzzles to trouble your head with. It's dead simple, fairly shallow and, some might go as far as to say, even a touch dated.

NO WAIT, IT'S GOOD!

So Maximo's levels are straightforward and the gameplay is pretty much on one level, but this doesn't mean it's a bad game and this is where Maximo has the potential to really shine. In addition to the great little gameplay quirks like losing your kecks from the Ghosts games, the unrelenting hardcore gameplay has made it through to PS2 as well.



Zombies hatch from these pod things and then come to seek you out. Beware!

Playing as Maximo you really do get the feeling that this is a 16-bit 2D game that's been caught up in a wild 3D whirlwind and transformed into one of the most intense arcade experiences ever. The hack and slash action doesn't let up, lives are limited, continues are rarer than hens' teeth and you only get to save your progress in exchange for your hard-earned coins. Games just aren't made like this anymore and that's where Maximo will either succeed or fail.

Get gear from chests

One hit won't kill 'em

Cool this fat dude off with a couple of sharp jabs to the gut

CVG RECKONS

It'll either be a fantastic example of how to capture the old-skool spirit in full 3D, or final proof that gamers' tastes have matured since the Ghosts heyday. Only extended play will tell. **Lee**

COMMAND & CONQUER: RENEGADE

FORMAT: **PC** OUT: **FEBRUARY 23** DEVELOPER: **WESTWOOD STUDIOS** PUBLISHER: **EA**

"Start killing and you'll find it hard to stop"

The villainous Brotherhood of NOD ranks with the best videogame baddies ever. They're so evil, they commit the cardinal bad-guy mistake of being too cocky and fighting among themselves.

Their pseudo-religious leader Kain is bald (good guys are hairy – just look at Chewbacca) and they pretend to be the heroes saving mankind from the imperialist GDI allies. Their fiendish scientists have even tapped into the mutating powers of mysterious substance Tiberium to create horrific new weapons. How very evil. And how very cool.

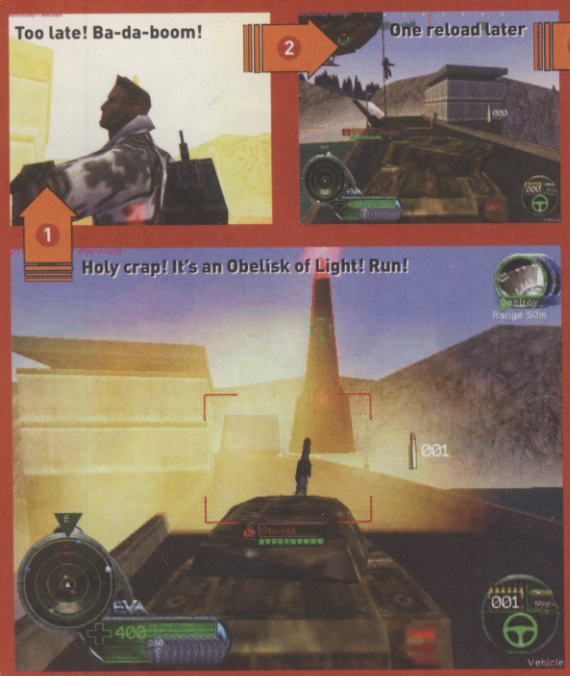
WANNA KILL? NOD, NOD

So it's small wonder that these villains have spawned one of the most successful PC game series – Command & Conquer. But strangely, until now Westwood's twisted universe has only been enjoyed by gamers with bulgy heads and calculator minds (a.k.a. real-time strategy nuts).

It's been a long time coming (Renegade's been in development virtually since the original came out in the mid '90s), but C&C has mutated into a first-person shooter.

You play ultra-hard commando Havoc, your sole aims being to crack cheesy one-liners and burn the Brotherhood a new backside using a flamethrower. Instead of laboriously managing GDI armies and 40 hours later (only a slight exaggeration) sending tiny tanks and pixellated

The switch to third-person for ladders feels natural, though it's tough to check what's up there like this



HAVOC BY NAME...

Command & Conquer pretty much invented the real-time strategy game 'tank rush', and while this version is inspired by Westwood's mid-Nineties classic original, you won't suddenly find 48 NOD Stealth tanks uncloaking in your base during Renegade. Cool as that may sound, Havoc's rocket launcher just couldn't fire fast enough and anyway, being a commando, he doesn't spend too much time hiding like a girlie in GDI bases.

Fear not though, for Renegade is nothing if not action-packed to the hilt. In fact you'll barely be able to leg it 20 yards without stumbling into a firefight...

Another copter bites the dust. Protect your GDI buddies

NOD paratroops! Kill!

Now steal the buggy

Damn, more air drops

Bam! And all this in about two minutes

Into the Mammoth, take aim...

miniature mini-gunners into teeny top-down enemy bases, Renegade is non-stop 3D action from the start. If you see 'em, look into their faces and kill them on the spot.

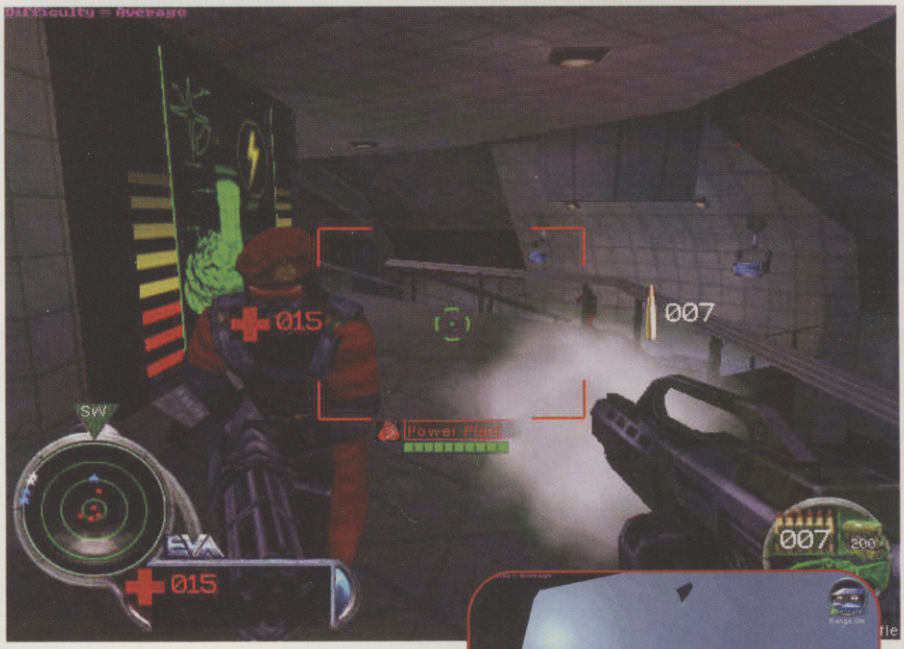
Set around the time of the first C&C game, missions are pretty straightforward. While there's sometimes more than one route through and the odd semi-secret way too, it's mainly a case of blasting the hell out of anything that has NOD's scorpion tail logo until you get to your primary objective, like rescuing trapped prisoners. Secondary objectives that crop up are worth completing too, since they normally reward you with a new toy or fewer enemies later on.

YOUR BUDDIES NEED YOU

Barrelling through levels armed to the teeth, picking up new weapons, ammo and health, you'll stumble across numerous scenarios where you get to pull your GDI buddies' butts out of trouble.

One minute you're rocket-launching NOD positions that have pinned down some GDI tanks, the next you're stealing a NOD buggy, controlling gun emplacements or one of those famous C&C Mammoth Tanks (oh, yes!),

Inside a NOD power plant. Woo, how colourful – but there's no gore so you can't redecorate in blood red



The weapons get more hardcore later on

Don't remember this one in the first C&C though

blasting NOD transport choppers out of the sky before they dump their human cargo. It's well orchestrated, and you feel like you're part of a much bigger conflict, with attacks, counter-attacks, parachute landings and base battles going off all around. You don't have to save GDI troops, but it's usually worth it since they'll help you for a while. Besides, they're your mates...

Each mission is rammed with authentic detail from the C&C universe. You can go inside buildings like the Hand Of NOD training facility. Destroy command panels and you'll put the building out of action. And taking down certain buildings can be the key to mission objectives – take out a power plant and Obelisk of Light defences are inoperative, letting Havoc pass.

FUN BUT DUMB

Renegade has its faults. For starters, unlike other C&C games you can't switch sides. Also, given its strategic heritage, some C&C-ers may not find the experience sufficiently cerebral. You can only control ground vehicles, which handle poorly compared with Halo's. Loading times are painful and enemy AI is unpredictable, but in a bad way. While there's time to sort some of this, it's too late to mess with the fundamentals.

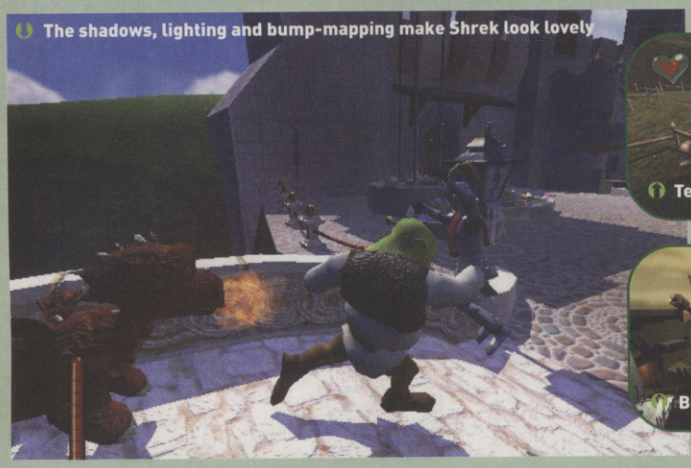
How many choppers? Nice weapon animation

CVG RECKONS

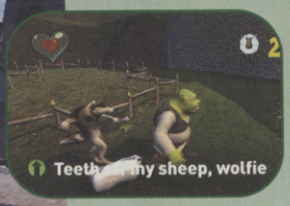
Renegade is unlikely to break any moulds but once you've started, it's surprisingly hard to stop. However, we can't help but wonder whether, by being out so long after the first C&C, it's lost half its appeal. **Pete**

SHREK

FORMAT: **XBOX** OUT: **MARCH 14** DEVELOPER: **DIGITAL ILLUSIONS** PUBLISHER: **TDK MEDIACTIVE**



The shadows, lighting and bump-mapping make Shrek look lovely



Teeth... tiny sheep, wolfie

Big and beautiful

Fart gags should still be funny on March 14th

The jester's just stupid. Punish him

Xbox is clearly going to be the machine of choice for fart-fetishists and pump-perverts. First Abe and Munch get gassy at the machine's launch and now Shrek is just about ready to blow a hole in his bump-mapped trousers and set light to the stink. Shrek farts, jumps and saves the day in his first videogame. Cool? Read on.

LUSTY CLUTCHES

Shrek, the game, is inspired by the movie but isn't based on the events that take place in it. Instead, Shrek has to rescue the Princess from Merlin's lusty clutches but to do so he requires the help of the Magic Mirror, and the mirror will only help him if Shrek carries out a bunch of good deeds around the land.

It's pretty traditional platform stuff, with themed worlds and simple-sounding but hard to complete challenges opening up new areas. One moment you'll be stopping a wolf-chomping sheep, the next you're throwing egg kids into a giant nest. Shrek's biggest pull, though, is sure to be the outstanding graphics, with massive environments and visuals lifted straight from the movie – all very impressive.

CVG RECKONS

A bit shallow but its younger target audience should be happy. **Lee**

It's one of the funniest animated movies of recent years, with some of the fanciest computer-generated visuals ever seen in a movie. Almost as amusing as Toy Story 2, Monsters Inc. should be a surefire hit for kids and adults alike with its blend of slapstick and subtle comedy. So the game of the movie can't fail, can it?

MONSTER (ST)INC?

Er, yes, actually. It's true that our version of Monsters Inc. was quite early, but unless there are some pretty drastic overhauls the game of the movie is going to be a big disappointment.

Be a killjoy and destroy this kid's sandcastle

At least Sulley's hairy belly is recreated well

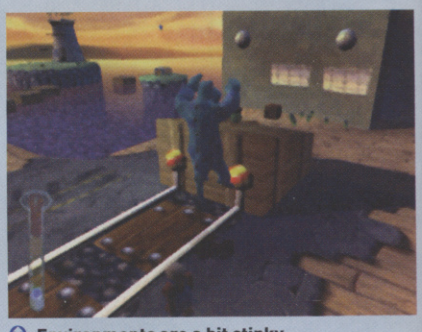
MONSTERS INC.

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **FEBRUARY** DEVELOPER: **DISNEY INTERACTIVE** PUBLISHER: **SONY**

Your lead monsters, Sully and Mike, are nicely animated but the environments are weak – especially compared to the retina-tickling greatness of Jak And Daxter.

Admittedly, you do get to scare people for fun, but gameplay seems mostly generic and there is currently none of the spark and atmosphere of the film, which itself is well worth a watch (yes, we have seen it, so we do know what we're talking about).

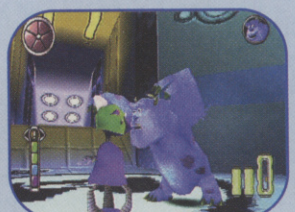
We're not going to write this off as a missed opportunity quite yet, but look up 'uninspired' in the gaming dictionary and you'll see the words 'Monsters Inc. TBC'.



Environments are a bit stinky

Mike the cyclops is a dude

"I'm worried about my game"



Also coming out on PSone

CVG RECKONS

Let's hope something drastic is done before this comes out. **Lee**

Sunny Delight
Sunny Delight
Sunny Delight
Sunny Delight Makes your mouth go mental

CACKMAN 2002 Calendar

January

11th SALT LAKE CITY 2002 Game out today! Excited Winter Olympics fans create their own salty lakes

8-11th CES 2002 LAS VEGAS - Tedious electronics show held in seedy desert gambling den. Bill Gates hosts Pod Race

31st VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 on PS2 released in Japan. Buy it. Turns out it's same old fighting game with two new characters. Reminder: must not happen again!

CACKMAN SHOPPING LIST
Tekken 4 (PS2)
Dead Or Alive 3 (Xbox)
Soul Calibur 2 (PS2)

February

1st Ghouls 'N' Ghosts mega-sequel, MAXIMO on PS2 out in Japan! Off to run around local graveyard in underpants, as sign of respect

2nd Held in police cells overnight for indecent exposure. Burly cell-mate rips my Maximo underwear

8th MONSTERS INC hits cinemas.

9th Released from police cells charged with hiding in neighbour's cupboard in blue gorilla suit.

15th VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 US release

22nd METAL GEAR SOLID 2 out today. Completed it a couple of hours later. Started playing Metal Gear Solid 2 again. Gave up

May

10th SPIDER-MAN movie released. Game proves awesome. Spidey senses overloaded

11th Rushed to hospital after home-made spider-suckers detach from wall

17th STAR WARS EPISODE 2 hits cinemas

31st World Cup begins! Official videogame flies off shelves.

CACKMAN SHOPPING LIST
Star Wars: Episode 2: Attack Of The Clones
Ep 2 Racer: Racer's Revenge
Returns: The Revenge
Star Wars Obi Wan 2: Beards of Vengeance
Jango Fett's 3D Galactic Jenga
Mace Windu's Puzzle
Sabers
Masters of Teras Kasi 2

22/5/02
Dear Alex,
Arrived at the E3 in LA today. You are missing the hottest show of the year!
Shrek Kart 2 on Wonder Swan looks fantastic. No sign of The Getaway on PS2. But the biggest story is Mario Sunshine and its revolutionary gameplay. You see, he bends over, pulls his cheeks apart and the sun shines out of his arse! Argonaut immediately announced Croc Sunshine. And Gex Sunshine is also slated for Xmas.
Take care, Cackman

Alex Simmons
CVG Magazine
London

June

21st England fail to make World Cup quarter-finals.

22nd Picked up World Cup 2002 on PS2 in Woolies bargain bin for a fiver

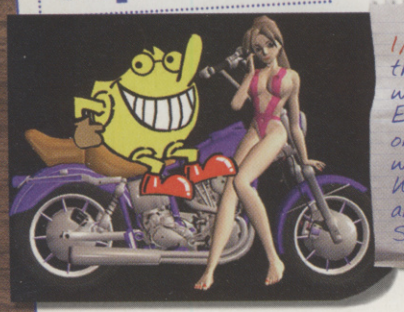
24th Wimbledon begins. Anna Kournikova advertises split-crotch sports thong and peep-hole athletics bra.

25th Anna Kournikova Tennis 2 flies off shelves

26th Kournikova knocked out of Wimbledon first round

30th COSTA RICA WIN WORLD CUP

September



1/9/01 ECTS notes. Best show of the year! Got myself photographed with some talented ladies at the Erotica Island stand, before moving onto the Razzle Interactive booth, with a stop off at the Reader's Wives CD-Rom Theatre. Didn't see any games though. Tell a lie, Zool Sunshine was unveiled.

16th ~~Nintendo release UK GameCube~~ Two new Pokemon Mini carts - Growlithe's Dog Eggs Derby and Squirtle's Splashback Attack. Both are squad-based real-time strategy games.

October

12th Tokyo Game Show highlights The Getaway on PS2, complete with new Basingstoke level. Rayman Sunshine on Xbox complete with specular lens flare emanating from Rayman's brown eye and bump-mapped arse-cheeks. Nintendo reveal radically-altered finished Mario Sunshine. He now eats coal and fires diamonds out of his sphincter.

25th Capcom's cel-shaded PS2 racer, Auto Modellista released

26th Cel-shaded Jet Set Radio Future on Xbox released

27th Cel-shaded House Of The Dead 3 on PS2 released

28th Everyone bored of cel-shaded games

29th Legend of Zeld released. Flops.

CACKMAN'S COMEDY CALENDAR

March

10th MOTHER'S DAY
Move old dear to the fruit cellar to make room for my Xbox & Shrek in four days!

14th UK XBOX LAUNCH! Use it to weigh down cellar trapdoor.

19th Japanese GameCube RESIDENT EVIL arrived. Chilling atmosphere amplified by mother scratching on trapdoor all night

20th Already sick of Shrek

21st My copy of Shrek Kart GBA arrived! Awesome!

22nd NINTENDO E-CARD READER released. What a crock of s**t!

25th Note: remember to buy more Pokemon trading cards for E-Card Reader

26th Arrested for holding up newsagent for Pokemon cards

April

13th ~~Nintendo finally release UK GAMECUBE~~ UK POKEMON MINI. Public fails to go wild.

14th Rushed to hospital with Pokemon Mini cartridge lodged in Windpipe

18th Super Mario Advance 2. Lose it inside Super NES.

19th THE SCORPION KING hits cinemas. Starring The Rock (Starts with a silent C)

26th BLADE 2 at cinemas. The Rock stops cooking and goes home.

July

1st EA release Costa Rica Soccer 2002

26th SCOOBY DOO movie hits the street. Stars Sarah Michelle Gellar with a CGI Scooby. Cel-shaded sequel expected

August

AUGUST 2ND
Alex - Cackman finally called from Space World in Tokyo. Pokemon on GBA announced. He claims Zelda now revealed to be drawn using crayons. Mario Sunshine gameplay also totally different. Mario fires laser beams out of his ~~bell end~~. Incredible! Croc Sunshine renamed Croc Starfish. GC Rayman Sunshine rumoured.

9th AUSTIN POWERS 3: GOLDMEMBER hits cinemas.

10th Hilarious "No Mr Powers, I want you to shag, baaaby!" jokes are all the rage.

11th Austin Powers' jokes are officially no longer the rage

November

15th Much excitement - HARRY POTTER and the CHAMBER OF SECRETS movie out today!

CACKMAN SHOPPING LIST
Harry Potter and the Pedestrian Platformer (PS2)
Harry Potter and the Predictable Side Scroller (GBA)
Harry Potter and the Chamber of Specular Lighting (Xbox)
Pottermon: Hogwart's Pupil Rancher (GB Color)

December

4th The Getaway (PS2) released

6th Tekken 4 (PS2) released

9th Ridge Racer 6 (PS2) released

11th Soul Calibur 2 (Xbox) released

13th Crazy Taxi Next (Xbox) released

17th Everything but the kitchen sink released

19th Kitchen sink released on all formats

25th Xmas Day. UK GAMECUBE launched! Shops shut.

26th Prince Naseem's Boxing Day on Xbox released

27th LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWIN TOWERS hits cinemas

31st Police find Cackman's mother is cellar. Cackman spends life in cell next door to that nice Mr Charles Bronson.

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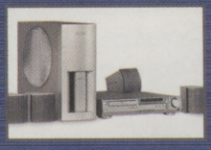
*Receipt of purchase required and sent together with a cheque for £4.99 (8.06 Euros) **No purchase necessary
The Winning Season promotion runs from the 15.10.01 – 15.1.02

1st Prize
Sony Plasma Screen



2nd Prize
Home Entertainment System

3rd Prize
Sony Micro System

Plus 250 Sony Walkman's

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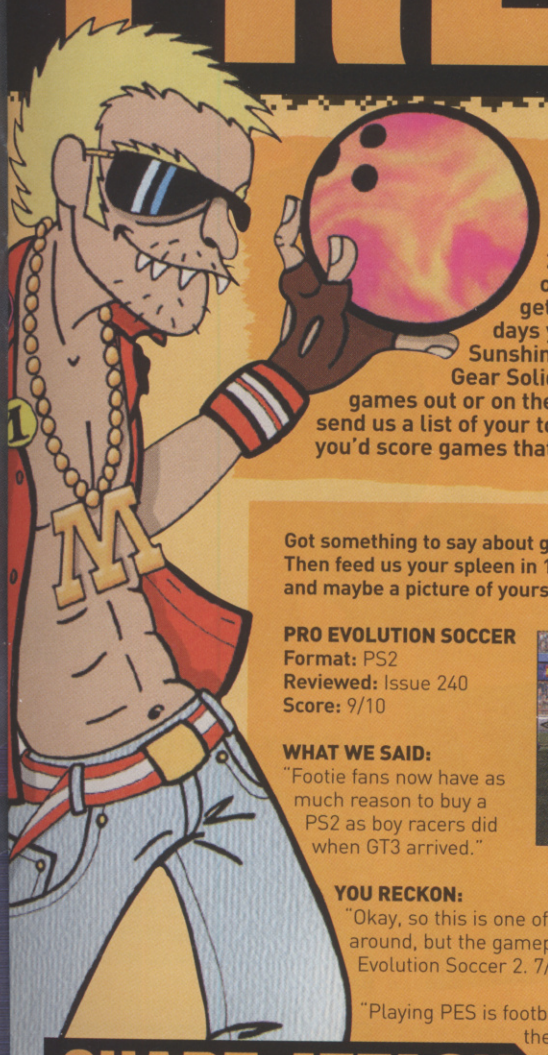
FREEPLAY



C'MON, GIVE IT TO US STRAIGHT

2001 was an awesome year with the likes of GT3 and Tony Hawk's 3, but it's going to get even better. Just think, in less than 365 days you'll have probably played Mario Sunshine and Zelda on GameCube and Metal Gear Solid 2 on PS2. There are so many great games out or on the way that you've got no excuse not to send us a list of your top ten faves. Also, we want to hear what you'd score games that have appeared in CVG. Get busy, people.

Do you want your 15 minutes of fame in CVG's Freeplay? Then get your high scores, challenges and opinions to us right now! Write to us at: Freeplay, CVG, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1T 4JD. Or email us at: mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk

YOUR SHOUT

Got something to say about games we've reviewed? Totally agree or violently disagree? Then feed us your spleen in 100 words or less. Include a score (out of ten), your details and maybe a picture of yourself. Or email us at: mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER
Format: PS2
Reviewed: Issue 240
Score: 9/10

WHAT WE SAID:
"Footie fans now have as much reason to buy a PS2 as boy racers did when GT3 arrived."

YOU RECKON:
"Okay, so this is one of the best looking football games around, but the gameplay isn't a patch on ISS Pro Evolution Soccer 2. 7/10" **Matthew Bolton, London**

"Playing PES is football heaven. Without doubt, this is the best sports game ever. 10/10" **Charlie Black, via email**

SILENT HILL 2
Format: PS2
Reviewed: Issue 240
Score: 9/10

WHAT WE SAID:
"Its spine-chilling atmosphere will leave you speechless. A top survival horror."

YOU RECKON:
"Silent Hill 2 scared me so much that I did nearly crap myself. Plus the gameplay and story are flawless. Twisted genius. 10/10"
Keith Marlow, Basingstoke

"The first game was stunning, but Silent Hill 2 towers over it like a big scary giant. More messed up and addictive than any game around. 10/10" **James Brook, Islington**

CHART ATTACK

CVG
What's turning us on

1	Metal Gear Solid 2 (PS2)
2	Halo (Xbox)
3	Rogue Leader (GC)
4	Amped (Xbox)
5	Pikmin (GC)
6	Castle Wolfenstein (PC)
7	Doom (GBA)
8	Medal Of Honor: Allied Assault (PC)
9	Resident Evil (GC)
10	Alien Vs Predator 2 (PC)

READER
From Darren Kingston, Braintree

1	Metal Gear Solid (PSone)
2	Grand Theft Auto 3 (PS2)
3	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 (PS2)
4	Zelda: Ocarina Of Time (N64)
5	GT3 A-Spec (PS2)
6	Mario Kart Super Circuit (GBA)
7	Jet Set Radio (DC)
8	Pokemon Gold (GBC)
9	Res Evil Code: Veronica X (PS2)
10	Star Wars Starfighter (PS2)

BEST EVER
Import games that never made it here

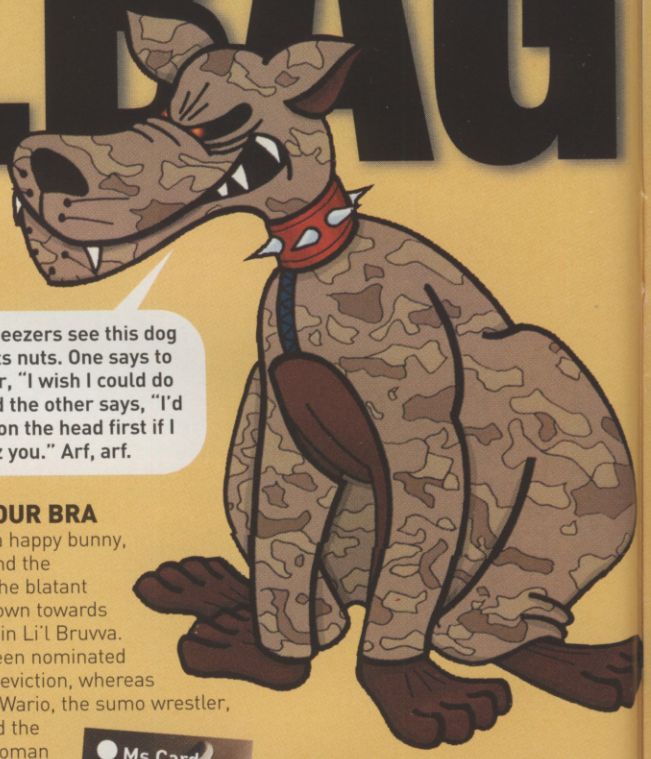
1	Chrono Trigger (PSone)
2	Radiant Silvergun (Saturn)
3	Seaman (DC)
4	Parasite Eve (PSone)
5	Xenogears (PSone)
6	BC Kid (PC Engine)
7	Kirby Tilt and Tumble (GBC)
8	Don Doko Don (PC Engine)
9	Super Mario RPG (SNES)
10	Ape Escape 2001 (PS2)

CVG GURU
Les Ellis's Top 10 games ever

1	Mario 64 (N64)
2	Half-Life (PC)
3	Final Fantasy 7 (PSone)
4	GoldenEye 007 (N64)
5	ISS (PSone)
6	Mario Kart 64 (N64)
7	Metal Gear Solid (PSone)
8	Bomberman (PC Engine)
9	Terminator Future Shock (PC)
10	Elite (C64)

HUNTER'S MAILBAG

Got something to say? We'll let you shout it out to the world. Just put pen to paper and send your thoughts to: Hunter's Mailbag, CVG, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1T 4JD, or email: mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk



Two geezers see this dog licking its nuts. One says to the other, "I wish I could do that," and the other says, "I'd pat him on the head first if I wuz you." Arf, arf.

GOLDEN BONE

BUT SERIOUSLY...

If the rumours about GameCube's delay until September are true, there will be plenty of Nintendo fans like myself who feel left in the dark. At the moment they're concentrating on the Japanese and American gaming industry, while us in Europe are being completely ignored. What they need to realise is that there are a huge number of fans here, all dying for the release of the Cube, and we are stuck with playing ancient 64 games.

Nintendo will find that in a couple of months many diehard Nintendo fans (myself included) will be tempted to buy a PS2 or an Xbox, because of the wait for a console which is already out in the 'important countries'. What chance do they have in the console war here if the console is released six months after Xbox and two years after PS2? I rest my case.

Tom Airey, Uranus

CVG: *Sorry, but Al told us to give the Golden Bone to a really serious letter this month. He mumbled something about it "lending the page gravity" and then wandered off to smoke a pipe with his feet up on a dog.*

See you next September. Maybe

BURN YOUR BRA

I am NOT a happy bunny, Mr CVG. And the reason is the blatant sexism shown towards Lara Croft in Li'l Bruvva. She has been nominated TWICE for eviction, whereas The Rock, Wario, the sumo wrestler, Homer and the Quake II woman have not once been nominated...

Ms Card, via email

Ms Card

CVG: *Gotta stop you there, Ms Cardypants, you've just contradicted yourself. If we were sexist wouldn't we have nominated Quake II Woman as well?*

"WHICH IS BETTER?"

Hey! I have decided to import a brand new console from the US. One problem – which one is the better one, Xbox or GameCube? They both look amazing and so do the games but can you tell me which is better. Thanks for your help,

James, via email

CVG: *If we had a pie for every time someone asks us "which is better", we'd explode into a mound of fat pastry-guts by Tuesday. Sorry, but we can't answer, even if you threaten...*

PLEASE help me. Should I buy the Xbox or the PlayStation 2? If you don't answer I will lose all faith in the world.

Ricky Wong, via email

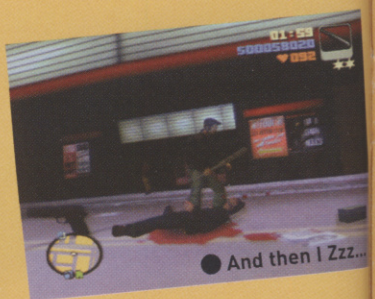
CVG: *Your choice mate, even if it means you lose all faith in the world.*

BLOW-BY-BLOW BORING

Just played GTA3. Wow, I just trashed about 12 vehicles, killed loads of cops, bashed a few grannies and shotgunned several prostitutes. The law was coming at me, so I stole a pick-up truck. Knowing the game was up, I drove off a cliff and waited for my now-blazing car to explode. I wasn't going back to jail, no way, not again.

Bazza, via email

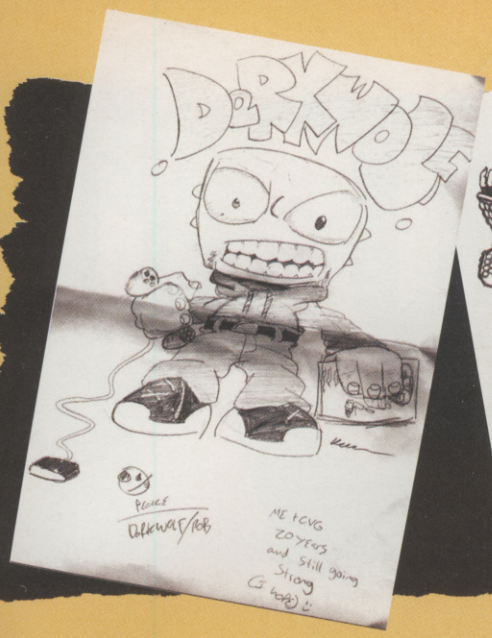
CVG: *Readers, why not send in your detailed description of EXACTLY what you've done in your fave game? To someone else.*

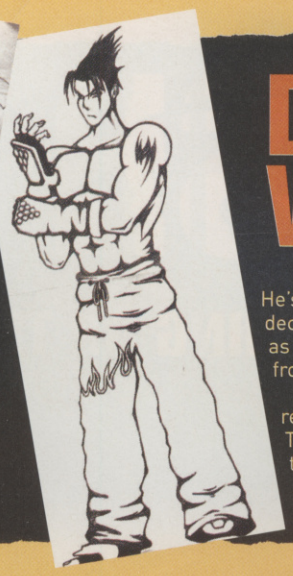


And then I Zzz...

MY GBA'S A PORTABLE SNES!

I'm a bit disappointed with all the SNES and PSone conversions on the Game Boy Advance. I didn't pay £90 so I could have a portable SNES. The GBA is a powerful console, and we don't want old SNES conversions, we want new GBA games or at least American and Japanese conversions of hits that didn't make it over here. Now would be a good time to





DRAWINZ WOT YOU DUN

He's one crazy mofo! A loyal and loony fan of CVG, Darkwolf, decided to send in a self-portrait which clearly identifies him as the long-lost twin of the Stay-Puffed Marshmallow Man from Ghostbusters.

Our second pic comes from a more mentally stable reader, Mark Haslam from Manchester, whose drawing of Tekken's Jin Kazama was sent in to highlight Mark's idea that Tekken would make a great movie. If it's going to be anything like Street Fighter 2, with bendy-limbed muscle-head Jean Claude Van Damme, have mercy on our souls.

release Final Fantasy 3-6, Front Mission, Secret Of Mana 2 (Seiken Densetsu 3) and many others. Dan is a funny crazy bloke. He reminds me of myself in my post-school days.
Snoopy, via email

CVG: *So you're calling yourself a 'funny crazy bloke'? Isn't that what foreign exchange students say when they're trying to chat up the girls?*

SHORT STUFF

Happy birthday, CVG. You are the old (but still wise and knowledgeable) fart of the games mag world.
Stephen Wentworth, email

First of all, the 20-year special; a bit pants weren't it?
Paul, East Sussex

CVG: *Didn't like the lolly then?*

Since PS2's launch they've used the slogan 'the third place'. What is it? And what are the first and second places?
Spider, via email

CVG: *Marketing money well spent, then Sony.*

A PRODIGY WRITES

At the age of 14 I have spent 11 of those years arguing about which console is better! I bought a Nintendo at three and a Game Boy at four...
Gavin P, via email

CVG: *Run for your lives, it's a boy genius! Advanced debating skills at three! A credit card at four! Compulsive liar at 14!*

TOP 100 GAMES CONTROVERSY

CVG, as usual you rule and make every other mag whimper in your greatness, but I can't help but notice that Dragon Force, the greatest strategy game ever to be produced by good-old Sega, wasn't even given a mention in the Greatest 100 Games! I used to own it and it rocked! When the Saturn died I decided to sell my console and all my games (including Dragon Force) and I consider this the worst move of my entire life. Thanks for 20 years of top-notch gaming and hopefully I'll die holding issue 1200 of CVG.
McH, via email

CVG: *And make sure you send us a picture when you do.*

The Top 100 Games really surprised me. No Track & Field, no Final Fantasy 3 (or 6) and No Dance Dance Revolution? [rattles on about DDR for ages]. Also, I'm sorry but I have to agree with some of your readers, your new layout does suck a bit. The best issues were sort of 1996-1997. I don't know why but it doesn't have the same magical spark. But, hey, as long as I live I'll still read CVG.
Anthony Cheng, via email

CVG: *What? Even if we insult you, knob-head?*

CONSOLES WOT YOU CUSTOMISED

Hi, CVG, I have attached some images of cool consoles I made in Paint Shop Pro 7. I hope you like them!
James Doherty, County Donegal

I liked how you decorated the different consoles (Issue 240), and as I was bored, I thought I'd make some of my own. Please find attached 12 images of my 'attempts'. I know they're crap – you can award me with Hunter's poo.
Matt Cox, Manchester

CVG STINKER

WAKE US UP WHEN IT'S OVER

The Top 100 Games feature (CVG 240) tells us about a lot more than just our favourite games. I was really surprised at the number of kids who must have access to games PCs. You're going to have to increase your PC coverage, but who the hell voted for Max Payne? The game wasn't even out when you were touting for votes! Another surprise was the poor showing of the PSone bearing in mind that statistically it's probably the only machine that over half your readership possess. Then there's Elite. It seems the bulk of your readership isn't old enough to remember Elite, so what you now need to do is to work out your age rolloff statistics and weight the results accordingly...

And, finally, Nintendo. A three-trick pony apparently. Without the Game Boy, Rare, and Miyamoto they'd be toast. But then, without my legs I'd be two feet shorter!
Deke

CVG: *And without your letter this page would be a good deal less boring, Deke. "Work out your age rolloff statitics"? Pass the cyanide.*

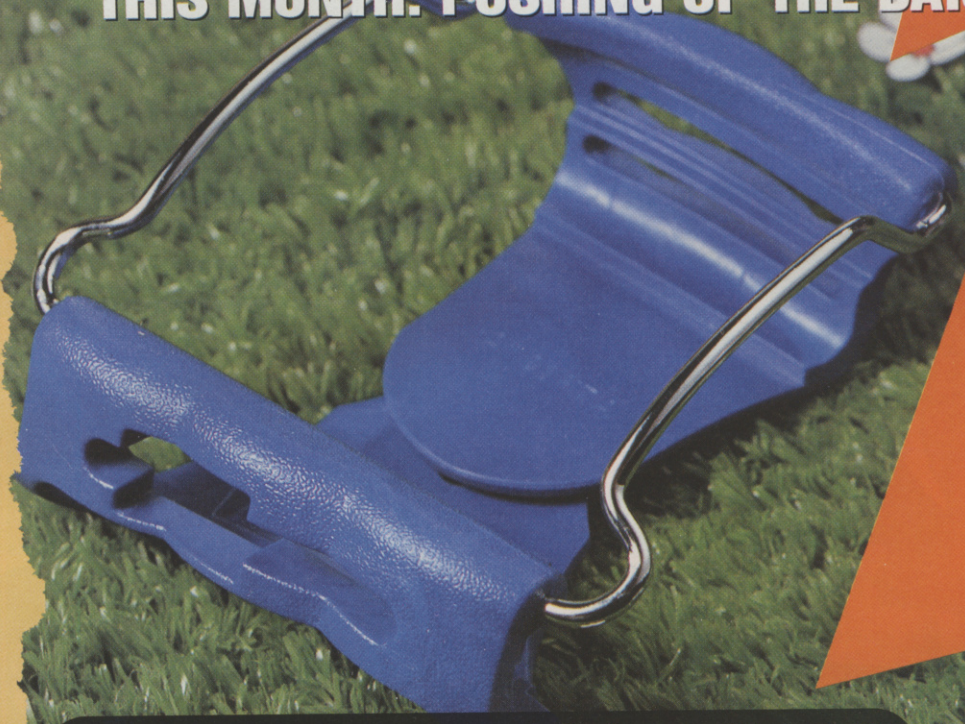
HAVE YOUR SAY

Last month we teamed up with Microsoft to give you lot a play on Xbox's hottest titles. After a day of gaming, we then asked those there when (or if) they were going to buy themselves an Xbox.

ON IMPORT RELEASE?	8%
MARCH 14 UK LAUNCH?	8%
WITHIN FIRST YEAR?	31%
EVENTUALLY?	38%
NEVER!	15%

SMASH IT UP

THIS MONTH: PUSHING UP THE DAISIES



Christmas will soon be a hazy memory (phew!). But one thing that won't go away with an Alka-seltzer will be the crud given to you by relatives who have no concept of quality or taste. Rather than having your homes poisoned by these foul peripherals, send CVG the offending item and scribble down in 50 words why we should waste our time smacking the life out of it.

Send your hated gaming objects (games or hardware) to the usual address, marked: Smash It Up. Sorry, but we can't return any entries. Only the best entry each month will get a replacement prize. Please state what game formats you own.

BUG STOMPER

TELL US ABOUT THOSE GAMING GLITCHES

Face it, we've all seen them. Sometimes they're just amusing little glitches. Other times they're horrific balls-ups that have the ability to ruin whole games. Bugs – no matter how hard they try, they can never quite get rid of them.

So to make sure fellow players know where to expect a code cockroach, let us know when you find one. We'll print the worst offenders and crush them with a great big CVG hobnailed boot.

Send any crime candidates you come across to mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk, sit back and allow us to do the rest.

GTA3

Format: PS2

On the first island, leave your hide-out, turn right, take the lower branch of the road and you may see a taxi driving in midair. It stays level until the road comes up to meet it. *Adrian Holly*

Floating taxis? If you're not on GTA3, best see a doc

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE

Format: DC

Sometimes a glitch lets creatures called Sinow Beats come through doors and attack you. In a corridor it's impossible to lock onto the target, thus rendering them invincible. *Sam White*

Blue pests are causing Sam much hassle in the mines

REST IN PIECES

YOU SAY:

"The day I bought my GBA I thought I'd sort myself out with a wad of games and a Mad Catz Roll Cage to protect my purchase from bumps and bruises. Two days later I'm at the bus stop and some stupid ponce bumps into me as I'm on the last level of Mario Kart, sending my GBA crashing onto the edge of the pavement, cracking the screen. Show me blood!"
Neil Pointing, Bath

CVG SAYS:

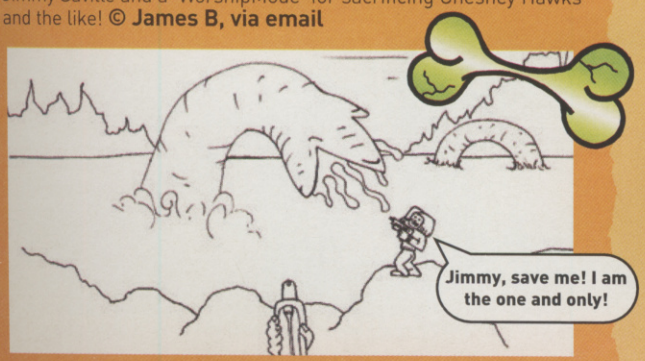
"A peripheral crime of this scale should not go unpunished. Burying the Mad Catz Roll Cage alive is the only just sentence. Eat dirt."

MELTING POT

SEND US YOUR GAME IDEAS

GOOD VIBRATIONS

Remember the film Tremors and those mad monsters? And the family with the elephant gun? Imagine multiplayer Tremors, built on the Quake III engine! You could have secret characters like Jimmy Saville and a 'WorshipMode' for sacrificing Chesney Hawks and the like! **© James B, via email**



ACTION REPLAY

GROOVY GAMING GEAR OF YESTERYEAR
#6: ATARI JAGUAR

Year released: 1993
Manufacturer: Atari

DID YOU KNOW?

Atari was nearly called Syzygy, which stood for 'the straight-line configuration between three celestial bodies'. But the name was already taken so they went with 'Atari', meaning 'check'.

WHAT IS IT?

The world's first 64-bit home videogame console, it had the potential to wee all over Nintendo's SNES and Sega's Mega Drive in terms of graphics, sound and processing power.

Not that it matters though, because Fox McCloud from Starwing is always going to cane the Jag's dodgy Trevor McFurr in Crescent Galaxy. And then there's Atari Karts – featuring such family favourites as Bentley Bear from '80s retro classic Crystal Castles and Pulpito, a squid thing from... um...

WHY DO I WANT ONE?

Two words: Tempest 2000. Probably one of the greatest remakes of all time, programmed by the legendary '80s Llama-lover Jeff Minter, author of such C64 classics as Attack Of The Mutant Camels and Sheep In Space. Nip along to www.c64gg.com/Minter_Jeff_DL.html to experience these classics. The site's endorsed by Jeff and you can download the games for free! Unfortunately, apart from Alien Vs Predator and a few others, it's mostly a bit cack.

LOOK OUT FOR...

The Jaguar CD-ROM unit. Its real beauty is the Virtual Light Machine. This is an update of the VLM that Jeff Minter has been doing for years, except this one looks ace, reacting to your music CDs in ingenious ways.

A further update has recently been embedded into all Nuon DVD players. Battlesphere is a home-brew version of Star Raiders, which has finally been published by a bunch of Jag fans (www.battlesphere.com). Unfortunately they've sold out, so best start sniffing around those auctions.

WHERE CAN I GET ONE?

You can pick up a brand-new UK boxed Jaguar for around £20! Check out www.ravengames.co.uk. At www.telegames.com/jaguar.htm you'll find an extensive stock of Jag goodies. Otherwise www.ebay.co.uk has the odd machine for a tenner and loads of boxed carts for around £5.

Alternatively, on www.addie.cjb.net you'll find masses of game info, a players' guide and the usual ramblings about future Jaguar development including J.U.G.S., a nifty bit of kit that lets you upload game files, demos and game patches to the Jaguar console from the Net. But it's unlikely you'll find a working Jag emulator yet.

THE DOGHOUSE

BEWARE: CHEATS WITH TEETH!

When CVG's flea-bitten mascot isn't patrolling the parks for possible doggy-style action, he's on the sniff for class cheats that'll make your gaming life a breeze. But if you need cheats or have tips you want our mutt to check out, drop him a line at our usual address.

DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX 2

Enter the following codes at the main menu

OUTFITS	CODE
JOHN ENGLEBERT	U,D,L,D,L,R,L,L,Square
JOEY GARCIA	U,D,L,D,L,U,D,U,Square
KENAN HARKIN	U,D,L,D,L,U,D,U,Square
MIKE LAIRD	U,D,D,R,U,L,L,D,Square
TODD LYONS	U,D,D,R,U,L,L,D,Square
COLIN MACKAY	U,D,R,D,U,R,R,U,Square
TROY MCMURRAY	U,D,L,D,R,L,U,L,Square
DAVE MIRRA	U,D,U,D,R,L,U,U,Square
TIM MIRRA	U,D,R,L,L,U,D,U,Square
RICK MOLITERNO	U,D,U,U,U,U,L,U,Square
RYAN NYQUIST	U,D,D,L,D,U,U,D,Square
LEIGH RAMSDELL	U,D,D,L,D,D,D,L,Square
ZACH SHAW	U,D,L,R,D,D,R,D,Square
SCOTT WIRCH	U,D,R,U,D,R,L,R,Square

FINAL FIGHT ONE

Rack up over 2000 fighting points to unlock everything in the game. This includes Extra lives, stage select, colour change, Alpha Guy, Alpha Cody and rapid punch. This will hopefully keep you going until your head falls off.

DIABLO 2: LORD OF DESTRUCTION

Ever get annoyed about not being able to store enough stuff? Create a game online with a password and a new character to go in it, setting the level difference to 99. Enter the game with a character and leave them in for about five minutes. Now leave – the server will keep going for a few minutes, meaning you can take another character in to either pick up or drop off stuff.

THUNDERHAWK OPERATION PHOENIX

LEVEL SKIP: Go to the options screen. Set vibration to 1, SFX and Music volumes to zero, then hold down L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 + Circle + Square and the message 'Spooky Cat!' should appear in the middle of the screen.

STEVEN GERRARD'S TOTAL SOCCER 2002

During a match use substitutions to keep your team moving. Also, the ball moves quicker than players so passing and kicking the ball up field will get the ball into the opposition penalty area quicker than dribbling. Players move quicker when they do not have the ball so don't dribble too long when attacking or moving out of defence. The best way to tackle is from behind.

CART FURY CHAMPIONSHIP RACING

This is some form of bizarre American racing, and it comes complete with a strange set of cheats, a selection of which we have kindly included below.

NO TIME OUT: At the Cheat menu input Square, L1, R2, Circle, Triangle, R1
INFINITE CONTINUES: At the Cheat menu input L1, L2, L1, Square, Triangle, Circle
BIG HEAD: At the Cheat menu input Triangle, Square, Square, L2, L1, R2
LOW GRAVITY: At the Cheat menu input R2, R1, Square, Square, L1, L1
JUMP: At the Cheat menu input L1, L2, L1, R2, X, X
FOG: At the Cheat menu input X, Circle, Triangle, L2, R2, L1
NIGHT: At the Cheat menu input R2, R1, Square, Square, L1, L1
ROCKET WHEELS: At the Cheat menu input L1, R2, Triangle, Square, Square, Triangle
DEATH CAR: At the Cheat menu input L1, Square, R1, R2, L2, L1
OPPONENT DEATH CARS: At the Cheat menu input Press L2, Square, L1, R2, R2, X
DEATH WALL: At the Cheat menu input X, Square, R2, Triangle, R1, R2
FMV: At the Cheat menu input L1, Circle, R2, X, L2, Triangle

GTC AFRICA

This game is hard. To make it easier on you we've got this nifty little cheat that will unlock everything in the game. Do this to unlock it all.

At the main menu press L1 + R2, L2 + R1, Left, Right, Start. You should hear a beep

Now select a mode and you will find that all the courses are selectable to drive on

And you can choose which vehicle you want to drive on them, as well

SILENT HILL 2

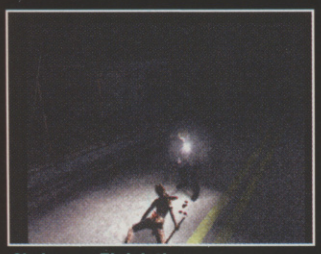
Silent Hill 2 is the best game in the world for the utterly deranged. Although it may be a little on the short side for some gamers, it has multiple endings and each time you play, certain new items should become available.

For example, if you pick up all the objects here, you will open another ending. And completing that will give you yet another.

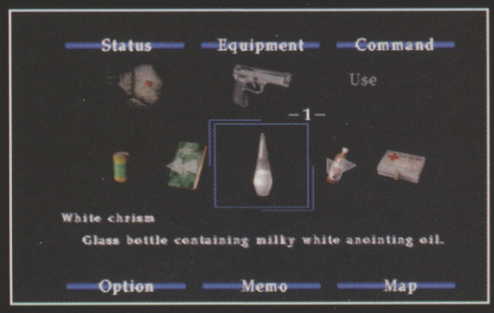
To get all of the things you see here, you must first finish the game at least once.

Books: Near the Texxon station is a newspaper stand with the Book of Lost Memories. The Book of Crimson Ceremony is in the nightmare hotel reading room

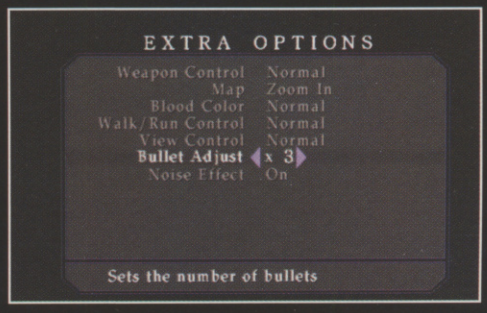
Obsidian Goblet: Complete the game, then start a new game and enter the Historical Society building. The Obsidian Goblet can be found on a shelf inside



Chainsaw: Finish the game on Normal action and puzzle difficulties and then start a new game after saving. You will find the chainsaw on the way to Silent Hill



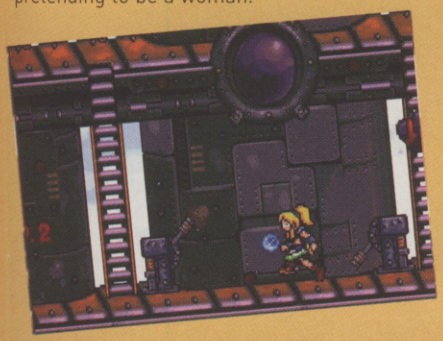
White Chrism: Start a new game. White Chrism vial is in the kitchen of apartment 105 in the Blue Creek Apartments



Options: In options press L1 or R1 to display an extra options menu. Plus: more options here after you finish

LADY SIA

In each level of each kingdom achieve a Perfect rank. This will unlock a bonus level for each kingdom. These allow you to spend more time running around pretending to be a woman.



YOUR BEST TIPS

Every month the best reader tip will be printed and will score a prize of one of the latest games. Send your tips to: barny_zoeller@dennis.co.uk or

THE DOGHOUSE,
COMPUTER & VIDEO GAMES,
DENNIS PUBLISHING,
30 CLEVELAND STREET,
LONDON W1T 4JD.

VIRTUA TENNIS 2

Want more colours to choose from? Then press R or L when choosing a character to get a different costume.

DUCATI WORLD

Here are some cheats for the best two wheeler on DC sent in by Joe Durham from Essex.

DUNNY MODE: Enter name as BADDRIVER
TODD 9000 IN QUICK RACE: Enter name as TODDMCARTOR
MORE MONEY: Enter name as GREEDYGIT
VIEW DEVELOPMENT TEAM: Enter name as TEAM

GUNMAN CHRONICLES

Type in: -dev -console -game rewolf in the command line parameter. Then press the ' key to activate the console and bash in one of these babies.

CODE	EFFECT
/GOD	Gode Mode
/IMPULSE	All weapons and ammo
/NO TARGET	Invisible
/NO CLIP	No clipping mode

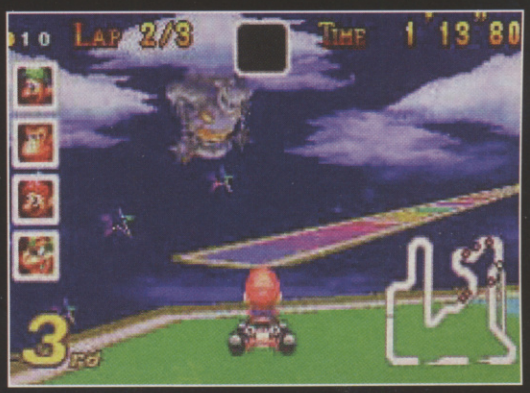
MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT

Like any self-respecting Mario game, the latest Kart racer on GBA is simply full of neat little tricks and secrets. So here are some short-cuts for you.

Rest assured that there are plenty more secrets to be had in this game, so if you find any, send them in to the usual place. Like the OAPs in the adverts, this game is a golden oldie, worthy of playing until your pension runs out.

Get to the first ramp and turbo over it and hang right to hit the second track. Then keep right and bounce ahead of the others

Look to the left for a long skinny track. Drive over the edge – this will make you bounce and allow you to land on it



TIME CRISIS 2

Buying a gun makes this game expensive. Luckily there are these bonus options.

MIRROR MODE: Complete Story mode without using any continues to get Mirror mode.
INFINITE AMMUNITION: Complete Story mode three times. You must enable this mode the third time.
AUTOMATIC AMMUNITION: Complete Story mode twice for auto ammo.
WIDE AMMUNITION: Complete Story mode four times. This needs to be enabled for the fourth time.
ONE STAGE TRIAL STAGE 2: Complete stage 1 in Story mode
ONE STAGE TRIAL STAGE 3: Complete stage 2 in Story mode.
CRISIS MISSION MODE: Complete Story mode one time.
MUSIC TEST: Complete Crisis Mission mode to get the Music Test option. This also unlocks Final Mission 2.
MORE QUICK AND CRASH MINI-GAMES: Get a top five score in the Quick And Crash mini-games to unlock more of them.

THE SIMS

While in game press Ctrl + Shift +Alt + c to activate Cheat mode. Now type one of the following. Sent in by John G.

CODE	EFFECT
KLAPAUCIOUS	100 simoleons
MAP_EDIT ON/OFF	Edit map
EDIT_CHAR	Open create a character screen
MOVE_OBJECT	Move things around

SPIDER-MAN 2: ENTER ELECTRO

CHEAT MODE: Enter 'AUNTMAY' as a code to unlock everything in the game. That's all or nothing, then.
INFINITE LIVES: Enter 'SUPERGOD' as a code to get infinite lives.
LEVEL SELECT: Enter 'NONJYMNT' as a code to unlock the level select option.
ALL TRAINING CHALLENGES: Enter 'CEREBRA' as a code to unlock all the training challenges.
ALL COSTUMES: Enter 'WASHMCHN' as a code to unlock all the different costumes.

REALLY STUCK

Absolutely stumped on a game? Ridiculed by your mates? There is hope: The Computer and Video Games tips helpline.

0906 466 4659

Open seven days a week, 8am-11pm. On the very rare occasion that they can't help, your query will be passed on to a support team, who guarantee to find you an answer within 24 hours.

Calls cost £1.50 per minute at all times. Charges will appear on your standard telephone bill. If you do not pay the bill yourself, seek permission from whoever does before calling. In case of problems, please call Customer Services on 0870 800 6155.

ALL GALLERY ENTRIES: Enter 'DRKROOM' as a code to unlock all gallery entries.
BIG FEET MODE: Enter 'STACEYD' as a code to unlock Big Feet mode. Big feet often point to big shoes.
BIG HEAD MODE: Enter 'ALIEN' as a code to unlock Big Head mode. No game is complete with out a stupid big head mode right?
DEBUG MODE: Enter 'DRILHERE' as a code to display the game's debug information.

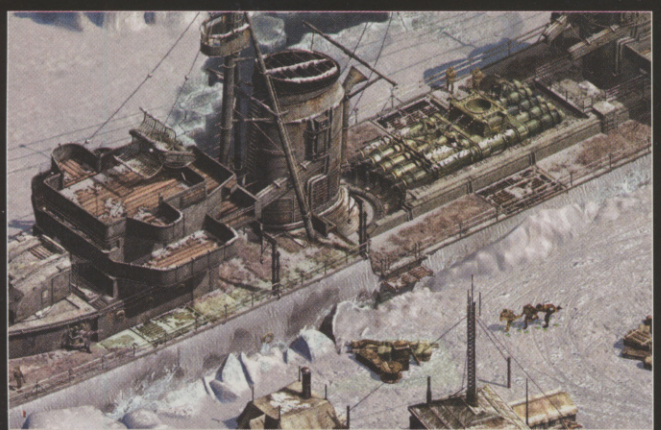
COMMANDOS 2: MEN OF COURAGE

Enable Cheat mode by entering GONZOANDJON as a name. Once done press one of the following keys to enable a cheat. It can also be activated in a mission by typing the GONZOANDJON after selecting a commando. Oh, when we were all lads in the war...

Invincibility: press Ctrl + I to become well hard

Invisibility: press Ctrl + V and go where you like

Mission Skip: press Ctrl + Shift + N to get further



Destroy enemies: press Ctrl + Shift + X to make them die painfully

Warp: press Shift + X and go to where the pointer is

ARE YOU THE DON OF GAMES? THEN TAKE THE CVG CHALLENGE

You may think you rock at games but how can you be sure? Easy: just pick a challenge below and send us your best result (take a photo of the winning screen or record on a video as evidence). Then buy the mag the month after and see if you make the top five.

NEW CHALLENGES THIS MONTH: Each month we will set new challenges as well as sometimes updating existing leagues.

WWF SMACK DOWN! JUST BRING IT
Choose single player, Ladder Match, against The Rock and win. Alex's score: 3.30.

SILENT HILL 2
Run as quickly as you can to save the point in the first apartment. Jenny's time 10.00.

LAST MONTH'S RESULTS: This month's three happy winners will each receive three month's worth of everyone's favourite games magazine, plus a top CVG T-shirt. Hurrah!

RE CODE: VERONICA X

1	6.33.45	Daniel Harris
2	6.41.10	Nigel Murray
3	6.43.42	Steve Kind
4	6.54.38	Pete Jameson
5	6.55.26	Gavin Rees

GRAN TURISMO 3 A-SPEC

1	2.18.767	Andrew Rehman
2	2.22.758	Jez Teague
3	2.24.932	Alan Giles
4	2.35.534	Marc Wicks
5	2.47.231	Brian Clare

HOW TO ENTER:
Take a photo or screenshot of the screen showing your score. Write your name, address and score on a piece of paper.

Send your entry with a recent pic of yourself to the usual address, marked: CVG Challenge, or scan your pics and email: barny_zoeller@dennis.co.uk

CHALLENGE CVG
BEAT US AND BOAST

For once you get the unique opportunity to play us at our own game. Follow the rules below and see how good you are or how bad we are.

THE CHALLENGE

Games: Pro Evo Soccer/ X-Men 2/ AVP2
Formats: PS2/ PSone/ PC
Rules: We make 'em up as we go along
To take part: Send your name and contact details to the usual address marking the envelope Challenge CVG or e-mail barny_zoeller@dennis.co.uk. Write in no more than 20 words why you reckon you can have us. If you are one of the two best be prepared to back up your words with action after we invite you to our dungeon where we will slay you in a brutal fashion. Come on wimps.

We just pretend you are all Germans and then kick the ball in your net five times

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A - 01
Action Man Dest. X
Age of Empires 1 & 2
Agent Under Fire
Airblade
Alex F's Play Man 2001
Alien Front Online
Alien Resurrection
Alien Trilogy
Alone in the Dark 4
Alundra 1 & 2
American Pro Trucker
Army Men: Land Sea & Air
Army Men: Lock & Load
Army Men: Omega Soldier
Assault Retribution
Atlantis

B - 02
Banjo Kazooie
Banjo Tooie
Batman Vengeance
Blade
Breath of Fire 4
Broken Sword 1 & 2
Burnout

C - 03
C & C: Red Alert 1 & 2
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GAME: DREDD VS DEATH **FORMAT:** PC/PS2/XBOX **OUT:** 2003 **DEVELOPER:** REBELLION **PUBLISHER:** TB

DREDD SPEAK

Not clued up with Mega-City speak? S'okay, we'll see you right...

Mega-City One
Futuristic US city where Dredd deals justice

Lawgiver Mk.2
Dredd's super-cool gun

Prowler Tank
The judge's riot control vehicle

Psi Judge Anderson
Tasty looking psychic she-Judge

Mean Machine Angel
Perp with a Rage Gauge on his nut

Max Normal
A regular guy, but not in Mega-City

Uglies
Collective name for ugly people

Fatties
Fat blokes with belly wheels to support their bulging guts

Smokatorium
Need a fag? Gotta come here

Resyk Centre
Corpses get recycled here

Halls Of Justice
The headquarters of the Judges

Cursed Earth
The irradiated wasteland outside Mega-City

Undercity
Lawless region hidden below Mega-City One

Words: Les Ellis Screenshots: Rebellion

HE'S PICKED A FIGHT WITH DEATH. COULD IT BE JUDGEMENT DAY FOR DREDD?

LIFE AFTER DEATH

Judge Dredd. Those two words strike fear into the heart of any wrong-doer in Mega-City One. He is judge, jury and executioner. He is the law. But there is one who doesn't fear him, one who normal men just cannot kill, because you can't kill what is already dead. Dredd, then, has surely met his match, when he busts onto consoles everywhere in 2003 because he's facing the most evil guy there is: Judge Death.

Remember the original Aliens Vs Predator by developer Rebellion? It was by far the best game on the on the ancient Atari Jaguar, as well as an outstanding first-person shooter that captured the tense atmosphere and sheer terror of the movies. It was scary, the Aliens were just like those from the movie and the Predator... well, let's just say he is one mean sonofabitch.

It perfectly captured the essence of the movie, but that's exactly what happens when die-hard fans make a game about the subject they're passionate about. Making a lame cash-in just isn't good enough – it needs to capture the feel of the original and also remain as faithful as possible.

So imagine how excited we were when we found out developer Rebellion was working on a Dredd game. Hell, this is the company who liked the square-jawed future cop so much it not only bought the rights to use him, but also the comic he stars in and the entire company that publishes it too! So you can lay money on Rebellion making a decent job of the game, and also on CVG for the first news on this red-hot blaster.

I AM THE JAW!

You may have read that Dredd Vs Death is for PC only. Well that's just not true, and the guy who said so should be on the receiving end of Dredd's Lawgiver handgun. Instead Dredd will be battling his arch-nemesis not only on PC but on PlayStation 2 and Xbox as well.

However, the three games will differ from one another. The PC game is a first-person blast set in the dingy Mega-City underworld, with Dredd hunting down the dark judges in classic comic book style. The console games follow a similar storyline, only the action's viewed from a third-person perspective, giving it a much more arcade-like feel.

So far Rebellion has been working on the project for just under a year, and has drafted in original Dredd writers

That fatty must be speeding, bust him

This should show you how big the city is

All illustrations © Rebellion

This guy wants you to give blood...

and artists from the comic books to ensure everything on the project is spot-on. And with over a year left in development, plus 24 years' worth of comics to use as source material, everything in the

...but as Dredd saw on his way in...

game will be geared to get the blood of Dredd fans and gamers alike pumping.

With this in mind, expect a dark and satirical side to the game, just like in the comics. And while the story is new, there'll be loads of references to previous plots and characters 2000 AD fans will lap up.

"HI, I'M DEATH'

Death has been haunting the pages of the comic for well over a decade, but the skull-faced freak really comes into his own on the screen. You'll laugh at the cruel one-liners he delivers as he rips the

...there's already loads on the floor

hearts from his victims, but even darker is the way he can take over the body of some nearby sap. Just imagine, you're Death standing next to Kylie. Sod wreaking havoc on Mega-City One, we'd strip naked and stand in front of a mirror for hours on end!

BRINGING JUSTICE TO MEGA-CITY ONE

Other familiar faces you'll find wandering the streets of Mega-City are Psi Judge Anderson, the metal-headed psycho Mean

I AM THE LAW

Judge Joseph Dredd. Hero or anti-hero, there's no doubt he's the hardest cop ever to enforce the law. And his look evolves further with the debut of his new 'muscle' suit – think Batman in the movies. Somehow Rebellion has managed to retain the comic look but with a high-tech gloss at the same time.

Chances are this cultist isn't going to ask for the time. Get your Lawgiver out and show him justice

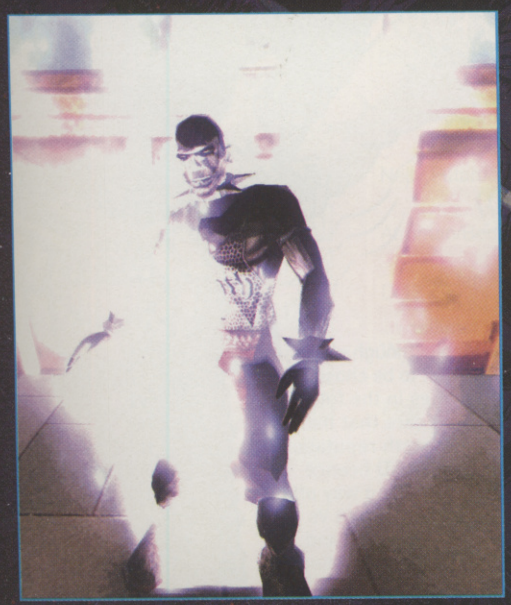
You will be able to get inside these vehicles

Machine Angel, Max Normal, Fatties, Uglies, Bat-Gliders – just about everyone you can imagine from 2000 AD. There's also a healthy sprinkling of low-down perps, who can be found breaking the law on every street corner.

With such a pedigree to draw from, it would be too easy for Rebellion to gloss over flimsy gameplay with gorgeous eye-candy. Luckily the developer is focusing on making it fun, while introducing all the elements that makes Dredd so special.

The sprawling metropolis that is Mega-City One has been perfectly recreated here, albeit in small, easy-to-handle chunks. Again, many of the locations have been carried over from the comic, and in some missions you have to go to a specific housing block featured in 2000 AD to arrest a perp who is also from a particular storyline.

You don't always have to adhere to the mission's objectives either. Take time out to scour the streets for jay-walkers and litter bugs, then bust a fat jail sentence on their ass before returning to the mission in hand.



That's the last time I have a curry before a crime spree

Catching these little guys is tough enough, but passing judgement is a whole lot more challenging. You could just run around, gunning people down. But this will attract the attention of the SJS, the equivalent of the NYPD's Internal Affairs, and their punishment for murder is death. Not even Dredd can escape these guys. Instead, shout a warning or slap on the cuffs and let them serve time in the Cubes.

Running around the Mega-City is a game in itself, checking out how many places you can recognise. Check out the Smokatorium, or pop on over to the Resyk Centre where they process dead bodies for any internal organs. There are also the Halls Of Justice, the Cursed Earth, the Undercity and the Aggrodome to check out, and for Dredd fans it'll be like visiting a home from home. It should also prove interesting for those who liked the Stallone movie – if anyone actually did.

No chance of chatting up that barmaid

DEATH TO MTV

The Dark Judges have been signed up to appear at next year's MTV Riot awards show with Metal Hammer. The main intro sequence will have a camera flying through the city to an arena where they are performing as a heavy metal band (what else) and various cutscenes during the show will feature them.

A pair of perps case out a job. Bag 'em!

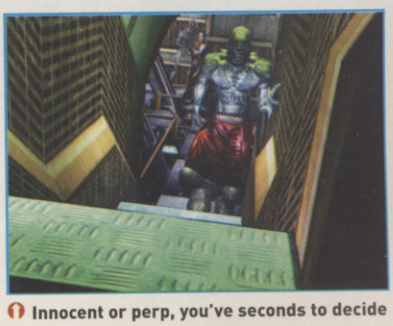
I'M DEATH

Death is a mirror to Dredd. He comes from Deadworld where law says as crime is committed by the living, living itself is a crime. Allied with fellow Dark Judges, he rids Deadworld of life to eradicate crime, and it's time to pass verdict on Dredd. Death can reanimate corpses to create an army of the undead.

MEGA-CITY ONE-DERFUL

Mega-City One is shifted around using Rebellion's meaty Azura engine, which can shift the entire city and its citizens around without blinking. However, the game would be incredibly complicated if Dredd had to stop and bust every perp he came across, which is why many of the areas you explore are strangely desolate compared to the usual bustling streets of the Mega-City.

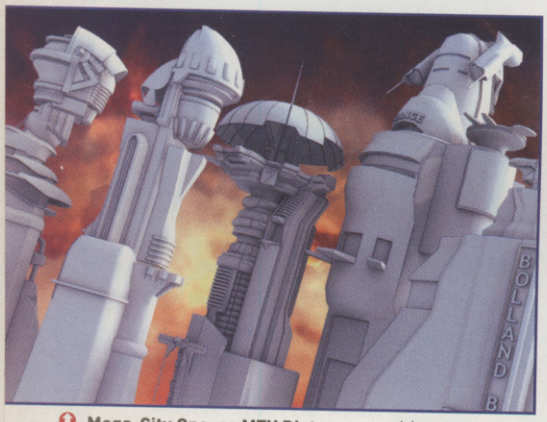
Yup, Death has carved a path through the City's civilians and



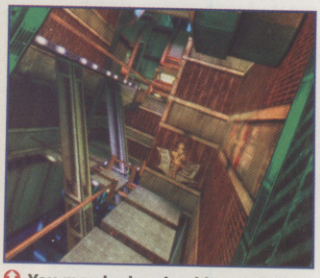
Innocent or perp, you've seconds to decide

THE LAW OF THE BOX OFFICE

A Hollywood studio throwing big bucks at a Dredd movie with a big action star. Sounds perfect. It didn't work. In fact it was dreddful. Sylvester Stallone may have brought in the punters but not only was the film as rough as Hunter's arse, but it broke the cardinal rule of Judge Dredd – he took the helmet off, the vain git. But, that's not the end of Dredd's Hollywood career. With Rebellion firmly in control of all creative aspects of the movies, and a stipulation in place that whoever plays the master of Mega-City One NEVER takes his lid off, moves are under way to bring two more movies out. No dates yet, and no confirmed stars, although we reckon that Jean Reno (Leon), Vin Diesel (Pitch Black), Russel Crowe (Gladiator), Hugh Jackman (X-Men) or Clancy Brown (Highlander) would make awesome Dredds.



Mega-City One, as MTV Riot viewers will see it next year



You may be involved in gunfights on platforms high up in the air

Judge him too harshly and you could be the one getting punished

you've got the follow it and track him down. While these smaller game areas restrict Dredd's ability to fully explore the City, it makes the gameplay tighter and more focused. It's also a perfect battleground for classic 2000 AD fodder like the block wars, where two housing blocks fight for domination using the biggest weapons they can find, with the judges trying to keep the peace in the middle of it all.

I SENTENCE YOU TO... DEATH!

Luckily Dredd's favourite toy, his Lawgiver Mk.2 pistol, is the one thing he can rely on to settle a dispute, no matter how big the disagreement. It comes with a different type of ammo for every job: Standard rounds can kill or maim, while Execution ammo kills the victim stone dead. Hot shots are small guided missiles, High Explosive can take out large targets, Armour Piercing can cut through metal and, for when perps just won't come out of hiding, use Ricochet rounds that bounce around corners.

And that's not your lot. There will be other weapons you can pick up or get from the Halls Of Justice like a heavy rifle, bike cannons and robots. You will also be able to call in air strikes and use heavy Prowler tanks that can spray foam or more lethal ammo to quell any disturbances. Put it like this: you won't be short of firepower.

Big guns are essential in multiplayer, which plays an important part in each version of the game. Whether you fancy a bit of Judge on Judge action, or maybe a full-on firefight against the perps, it should all be in here. There'll be a load of familiar characters to play as too, although we reckon Dredd'll be the first to be chosen.

With more Dredd games in the future, Rebellion is taking great care that the first lives up to the mammoth reputation and potential that the 2000 AD licence and its fans, deserve. It's a long way off, but with a year's work done, Dredd Vs Death is already raising eyebrows and dropping jaws. With a history including AvP behind Rebellion, things are looking up for the Judge.

Veteran 2000 AD fans will love the way that old storylines are worked into the plot of the game

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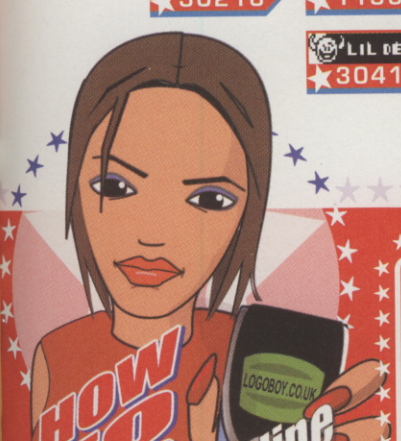

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Like this magazine it opens up and fits on your lap.

You've just demonstrated how simple it is to open up the official PS one screen. All you have to do now is plug it into the nearest power source and play. Or hook it up to your DVD, video, digital camera or digital camcorder for a pin sharp viewing screen.

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FORMAT: XBOX **OUT:** MARCH 14 (UK) NOW **(US) WORDS & SCREENSHOTS:** MIKE COOPER

CVG gets you hot and horny with a two-part Xbox review special

X-RATED PART 1

The green-eyed behemoth hit US stores on November 15, sending tremors across the gaming globe. An equally heavyweight line-up of launch titles is also headed for UK shores on March 14, so we Brits have got reason to start getting excited. Like dribbling children on Xmas Eve, CVG couldn't wait 'til March, so we blagged US versions of the biggest hitters and have torn them open for review, starting this issue with Microsoft's mutha fragger, Halo.

HALO

Armies of awesome aliens and grizzled marines clash in this epic bloodbath. Like us, you'll want to finish it in one sitting. You won't

At certain points you can hijack cool alien craft, like this Banshee

Format: Xbox
Cost: £ 44.99
Out: March 14
Players: 1-16
Developer: Bungie
Publisher: Microsoft

Since the dawn of time, frag-freaks have been grunting on about the superiority of the PC when it comes to first-person shooters. And the annoying thing is, they've got a point. With heavy duty processing power, fancy graphics cards and super-precise keyboard and mouse controls, most great PC shooters far outdo almost any in console history; only a few exceptions spring to mind, including Perfect Dark, Red Faction, and the class GoldenEye.

Up 'til now it's been impossible for a console to match the brute computing force of a high-spec PC and create a game that could challenge the likes of Return To Castle Wolfenstein, AVP2, or MoH: Allied Assault. But there's a new brute on the block, Xbox, bringing with it the power and potential to level the stakes in the battle for FPS supremacy.

And Halo proves that consoles can finally kick it with the PC crowd in this neck of the woods, offering an awesome blend of solo and multiplayer co-op magic. "But what about the controls?," you scream, having seen the awkward-looking Xbox pad. Admittedly, the controller has received a lot of stick for being about the size of a small turkey but truth is the controls in Halo are perhaps the most comfortable and instinctive ever found in a console shooter. Add sizzling gameplay and a terrific, twisty plot into the mix and what you're left with is one of the finest first-person blasters ever to grace the console world.

The super-detailed textures and visual style of Halo will blow you away

Halo's big secret: Covenant aliens aren't the real baddies. Meet the Flood...

Covenant aliens come in three sizes: tiny, big and bloody huge

CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE

You play an elite cyborg, whose ship is forced to crash-land after alien race the Covenant launches an attack. You and your marines end up on weird ring planet Halo and it's up to you to pull Mankind's butt out of the fire.

Now picture this: your motion tracker picks up a cluster of hostile red dots approaching from the east, but suddenly they vanish. In a previous skirmish most of your team were wiped out, so that just leaves you and a couple of grunts to clear a dense woodland area. You catch a glimpse of a Covenant alien hiding behind a shield in the distance. It's an ambush! So you whip out your sniper rifle, zoom in and blat the ugly sucker with one clean shot.

You can't beat the feeling of lobbing a grenade into a crowd, then watching bodies fly like birds

You can use all enemy weapons, including this plasma gun turret

As your Banshee twists and turns above, you leave vapour trails

This fat-headed Flood alien bursts, releasing loads of little slimy critters

But the moment your weapon makes a sound, hoards of aliens appear and a full-scale battle kicks off, catching you in an insane crossfire. And just when you thought things couldn't get much worse, an enemy dropship unloads another small army of aliens, who just the battle. Arse.

What do you do? Find cover behind a cluster of rocks and fight off legions of ETs with your marine buddies, offering back-up in a tactical and intense firefight lasting about twenty minutes. And that's the norm in Halo – there's rarely a moment when you're not immersed in heart-thumping.

Blitzing through dark corridors, chaos is round every corner

CO-OP HEAVEN

There are ten Campaign stages and each is enormous and tough as old boots, even when you're playing on the 'normal' difficulty setting. Each level takes a few manic hours to work through by yourself, but you can crank up the excitement factor by tackling it in the two-player co-op mode. Playing in either split-screen or via the Xbox link cable, this hasn't just been tacked on as a multiplayer extra, it's a whole new game.

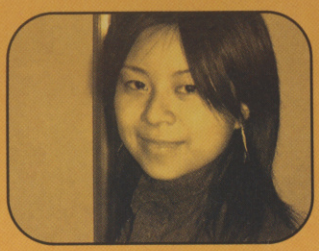
Thankfully you can play the entire campaign with a mate without having to unlock each level in single player first. And even though the levels are the same as the single-player game, playing through Halo in co-op feels totally

You lay down heavy duty fire, while your buddy snipes a clear path

Prapp-prapp! The assault rifle will quickly become your best friend

YOU SAY...

"100 times better than GoldenEye and by far the best multiplayer game I've ever played. I'd sell my PS2 to buy an Xbox."
JAMES HARDING



"I'm already addicted to it. The two-player is very cool, and it's nice having someone to back you up. And the backgrounds are fantastic."
VIVIEN 'AYUMI' LEE

"Absolutely fantastic, best game on Xbox. The co-op stuff is brilliant and the visuals are superb. I love the whole jeep thing."
LEWIS PACKWOOD

"Amazing! The action is really fast, and the multiplayer and being in the jeep are by far the best bits. Shame you can't run faster though."
MYSTERIOUS MR WALES

HELLO, HALO'S HEAD HONCH

We get fraggy with Halo's Product Manager Steve Fowler. Headshot!

Halo is the true star of Xbox's US launch line-up. The shiniest graphics ever seen on a console combine with genre-busting gameplay to bring you one of the finest console FPS games known to man. And 16-player multiplay on four linked Xboxes? Mama!

EVE OF THE WAR

On the eve of the official Xbox launch, we flew to Seattle, home of Microsoft, to visit Halo's Product Manager, Steve Fowler. He was full of trademark American 'optimism' about the latest Halo pre-order figures. "US retailers are selling Xbox in bundles," he quacked, "and you have to pre-purchase three titles. Of those

different and amazing because you're applying different tactics all the way. Trust us, the sensation of camaraderie is unlike anything you'll have come across in a console shooter.

Throughout the missions, you'll be constantly discussing what strategies to implement in each battle scenario. Also, aliens react differently when two of you are playing: one of you can distract them, while the other sneaks around the back; if you both attack from different sides, they'll split up and try to take each of you on in equal numbers. In later levels there are swarms of small jellyfish-like scuttling creatures that'll try to latch onto you in silly numbers.

There's virtually never slow-down either, no matter how much mayhem is kicking off on screen.

A Covenant dropships takes off

Shoot Banshees out of the sky

A Flood freak gets mown down

I GOT YOUR BACK!

In a typical scenario, you both storm an alien bunker and employ a battle move that involves one of you distracting a giant Covenant bad guy as your partner wedges a plasma grenade in the back of his armour, all the while fending off loads of little aliens. Boom! You decorate the walls in a vibrant mix of extra-terrestrial blood, then go back to the surface and rendezvous with some marine survivors who've been in a battle up top while you've been gutting the base.

There's a 4x4-armoured Warthog jeep overturned on the beach, so you flip it and each choose your positions. You can drive, fire your weapon first-person from the passenger seat, or man the heavy machine gun on the back of the vehicle in third-person. An AI soldier will occupy whichever position is left.

If there are two Warthogs in the area, you can drive one each, with your own team of AI marines riding along with you (to offer covering fire). Plus you get to bomb around in nearly every alien vehicle that pops up in the game – including a flying Banshee – and are able to use most ET weaponry (lots of cool sci-fi laser-type artillery!). The two-player experience is utterly brilliant, but it's all the cool detail, the mysterious plot, and tight gameplay that make Halo feel so involving and unique.

AI = ALIEN INTELLIGENCE

There are so many great touches in Campaign mode and you'll love 'em all whether in one or two-player, but it's the AI of the enemies and your interaction with them that really makes it stand out. If they see you chuck a grenade at them they'll dive out of the way. Lodge a pineapple in their armour and they'll run around, arms flailing, before exploding into vapour. They use their surroundings as you would too, ducking behind walls or any object that offers cover.

Small aliens usually attack in large numbers but if they get

Pop! Hoards of creepy jellyfish-like Flood aliens plague the later levels

bundles we're getting about a 60 per cent attach rate for Halo, which is pretty high." What this means is that out of all of the Xbox games available, over half of everyone gagging for Xbox is gagging for Halo too.

Steve told us about the power of Xbox helping the Bungie boys and girls realise their dreams. "With Xbox you've only got one minimum spec," said Fowler, "and that's a huge spec. We could not build Halo with a minimum spec of a P3 733 with GeForce3 graphics card because we'd alienate our audience." But lucky Xbox owners get all this power for a fraction of the cost of a top-spec PC and minus the faff associated with different PC configurations too. Mint.

HALO SHINES ONLINE?

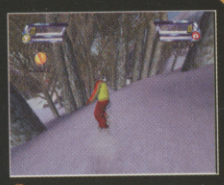
Halo is a stunning multiplayer experience, as well as a cracking solo or co-operative play one. We linked four Xboxes with four players to four TVs and played 16-player Capture the Flag heaven. But what of online play? "Once the Xbox online network is up and running," said Steve, "we have all sorts of aspirations of getting Halo, of some sort, online – whether that means this current Halo, a Halo 2, or some sort of additional disc we send out." You'll read about it in CVG first, but see p72 for now.

Meanwhile, Halo is the game that Xbox fanciers should be getting frothiest about, and a real showcase for the machine. In fact, the perfect game for a new console's launch. ●

ALL-OUT WAR

The battles in Halo are huge, and throughout the game you're thrown into some of the most ridiculously intense scenarios ever seen in a console shooter. There are times when hoards of aliens are moving in on you from all sides, on multiple levels, with enough firepower at their disposal to take out a small country. The level of adrenaline that bubbles up inside you as you blast through literally hundreds of aliens will make your hands tremble and your heart pump faster than a hummingbird on heat.

Storm into a battle and show 'em what you're made of



Chucking grenades is a brilliant way of clearing small areas

Switch to a rapid-fire weapon to fend off Covenant droves

Every battle is filled with one-on-one close encounters

The colourful explosions look mint

separated from their buddies they'll run like cowards. However, if you're faced by a big bad momma, they won't be afraid, hanging around to try to break your ass.

As the story progresses you come across another gruesome race of alien mutant-type creatures known as the Flood. Looking like a cross between a Res Evil zombie, one of the Silent Hill nurses and an Alien face-hugger, these guys are pure evil.

Some of these gooey monsters will attack you with blood vessel-like tendrils, others use human weapons like rocket launchers and shotguns, while there's one particular kind that looks like a huge walking Yorkshire pudding that explodes, releasing tons of gunky wall-crawling nasties. In certain parts of the game the Covenant and the Flood will be having a massive battle, and you can just let them get on with it or join in on the carnage.

GIVE IT TO ME GATESY, AHA, AHA

There're a few minor niggles, like the lack of map. The main character's jump is a bit floaty too, and some areas in the game tend to repeat themselves. But most of its weaknesses are easily overshadowed by the all-out action bonanza that Halo constantly puts in your path.

There are stunning details and sweet gameplay touches that'll impress you from start to finish. Try shooting enemy craft out of the sky and raiding the body of the pilot, or using invisibility suits to take out impossibly hard sword-swinging Covenant aliens. You can even sneak up behind enemies and butt them in the back of the head stealthily so as to not attract attention.

It's details like these, and the fact that the gameplay feels so fantastically organic and fluid, that make Halo a killer launch game for Xbox. If this is the shape of things to come, bring it on Mr Gates, 'cos this is the mutt's nuts.

CVG RECKONS

Halo is truly blessed with its slick sci-fi storyline, buckets of gut-buzzing atmosphere and explosively intense alien-annihilating action. Awesome in both single and multiplayer, this pushes console shooters to an all-new high and even gives the finest the PC can offer a run for its money.

9/10

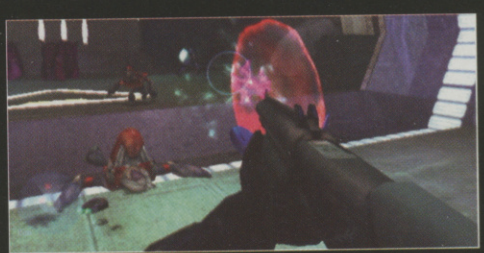
Who needs windscreens? They only get covered in bugs and bird crap anyway

HALO ONLINE

gamespy

Four Xboxes can be linked in the same room for 16-player chaos, but now GameSpy has extended its PC online gaming match-up software to Xbox, so players can deathmatch with Halo over the Net.

You need a broadband connection for it to work, plus you'll need to get involved with some downloading jiggery-pokery that doesn't look easy. So unlike GameSpy's support for Tony Hawk's 3, this might just prove a little too finicky for most.



Pop a few shotgun slugs into the enemy then run for cover behind this cool see-through shield. Ha ha!

AMPED: FREESTYLE SNOWBOARDING

Snowboarding's never looked this stunning or felt this real

Format: Xbox
Cost: £ 44.99
Out: March 14
Players: 1-4
Developer: Microsoft
Publisher: Microsoft

Every good game has to have 'a hook'. Something that grabs you by the family jewels and shouts, "Look at me, I'm different!" SSX Tricky's got fireworks, crazy afros, racing fury and rednecks, while Shaun Palmer's put Pro Skater gameplay onto the slopes.

So what does Amped offer extreme fanatics that they haven't seen before? What's the goddamn hook? Easy – hardcore freestyling action that puts you on a quest for media stardom in a cool Career mode, as well as a massive set of expansive mountainsides (there are well over 100 runs) that offer up the kind of freedom you won't have witnessed before in a snowboarding game. Chuck in monster visuals and a gigantic catalogue of kicking tunes, and you've got enough bait to lure any serious snow-head.

You pull off a sick trick, then bail like a tit. Typical. Keep practising

Try and get your picture taken by photographers all over the mountain to earn media points

YOU SAY...

"This is a really good snowboarding game. It looks real, but the freedom is the best thing about it." SIMON LAI

SNOW SIM 2002

When you first pick up the controller and start steering your rider down the slopes, you'll probably crash loads of times and think that the control system feels quite awkward. True, it's not the same as any other snowboarding game, but after a bit of practice you'll soon realise that the controls are actually very natural and realistic.

The reason you'll initially find it unusual is because Amped could be classed as the first snowboarding simulation – it's all about timing, balance and creating a realistic sensation. Where other extreme sports games are quite forgiving, in Amped you're forced to learn the art of becoming a better boarder and this is smartly incorporated into the gameplay.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

You pelt over a few moguls, jump off-piste, weave through a cluster of silver birches where you spot a camera symbol. You charge over to it. For a few seconds you're in the view of an eager cameraman, who'll capture your

YOU SAY...

"Obviously the graphics are very sharp and impressive, but I prefer the fast gameplay of SSX. The level of realism is impressive." BYRON REDMAN

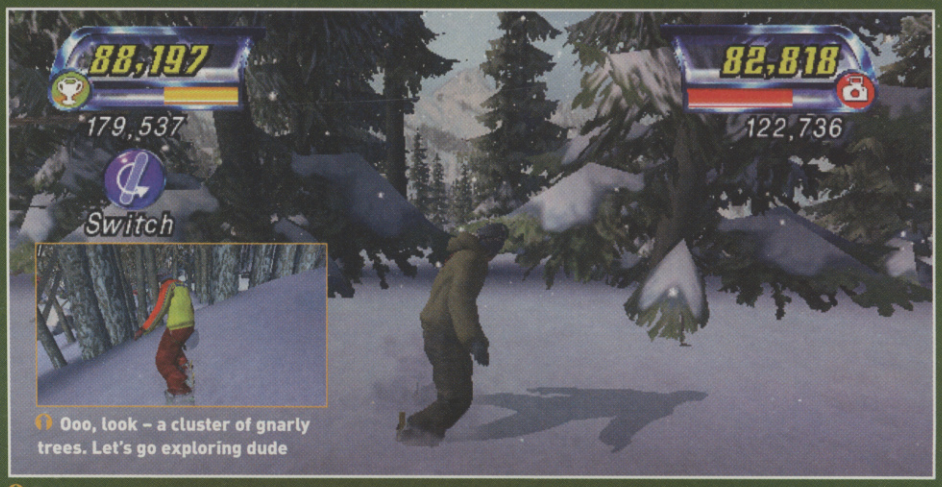
Follow the Pro Rider down the slopes and beat his trick scores to complete the challenge

Green rings show you where to start your trick. Make sure you go large to beat the Pro

THE HILLS ARE ALIVE

The feeling of freedom and the possibility for almost endless exploration is phenomenal.

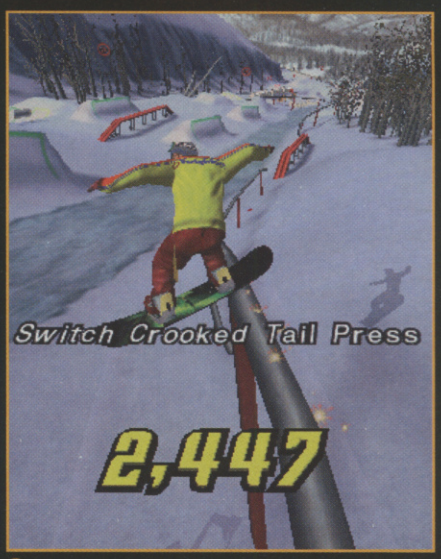
Once you've unlocked all the runs there are literally hundreds of possible routes, meaning that every run can, and probably will, be different each time you venture onto the beautiful freezing landscapes. Plus the environments are bursting with objects and stunning detail, so there's hardly a moment when you're not wowed by your surroundings.



Ooo, look – a cluster of gnarly trees. Let's go exploring dude

Every mountain has got endless routes, and the freedom of off-piste riding is a real buzz

Unlike games like SSX, Amped makes you feel like you control the boarder, not just the board



You can link crazy numbers of tricks together

The lens only stays on you briefly so act fast

stunt on celluloid. Pull off a decent trick and you'll acquire 'media points'. In the Career mode there are loads of objectives on each stage to fulfil in order to become a snowboarding superstar, but it's a long tough road to global success. Other than gaining media points on each level, you'll be faced with challenges like impressing sponsors, who want to see certain tricks, like the Gift Shop Guy who wants to see spins and flips.

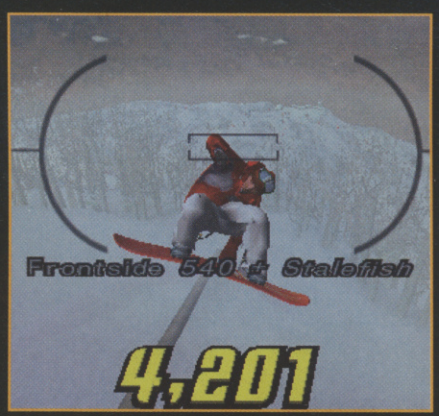
There's a bar at the top of the screen that measures how well you're doing, on a scale that starts at Bored and finishes on Amped. If you burn down the slopes and keep giving the sponsors what they want to see, the bar will gradually fill up until it reaches Amped, and you've got to keep it there in order to complete the objective. This aspect of the gameplay acts as a constant tutorial and also unlocks new clothing, as well as offering up great challenges along the way because you're constantly forced to hone your skills throughout, be it flip tricks, your half-pipe talents, rail slides or any other crazy moves.

MOUNTAINS THAT GROW

On your journey to boarding brilliance, you face other hurdles like storming downhill on the tail of pro riders, trying to out-trick them at certain points with the incentive being you'll be taught a new move for your efforts.

Once you've completed the objectives on one run, a new drop-off point becomes unlocked further up the mountain, so as you improve you're making the mountain more and more accessible. You're rewarded for exploring too, and being adventurous and taking crazy off-piste routes rewards cool new stuff to trick off and other hidden booty.

Where Amped seriously bails is its lack of split-screen multiplayer, instead offering uninspired turn-based action. It's a cardinal sin, stripping you of potentially awesome four-player split-screen action on the finest-looking slopes in console history. But while it may be flawed, if you're a snowboarding nut and dig the idea of some tough sim-style action, Amped will be a fast run to boarding Nirvana.



'Tweak' grabs using L and R for more points

CVG RECKONS

Amped steers snowboarding in a whole new direction with its cool fame-chasing Career mode and super-realistic snow-churning action.

8/10

FUZION FRENZY

Did someone say the words 'party game'? Run for the hills!

This shooting mini-game is like a poor fairground attraction

A magnifying glass may come in handy when trying to spot your character, unless you own a 40-inch TV

Draw a knob in neon lights

Skim around in this giant bowl

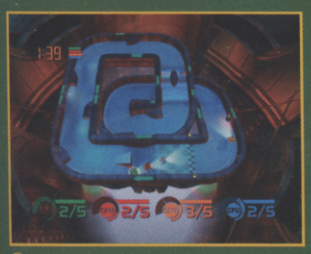
Running around, collecting stuff is the main aim in most games

Rhythm-action: nothing new

YOU SAY...

"Kind of dull. I didn't really like it. The mini-games are boring, but I think it's a game for younger kids."
KRIS STROLIA

Run, collect, run, collect. Zzz



Micro Machines without charm

Format: Xbox
Cost: £44.99
Out: March 14
Players: 1-4
Developer: Blitz Games
Publisher: Microsoft

'Party game' is a phrase that warrants shudders of disgust, especially when you think the less-than-brilliant Mario Party 3 is the pinnacle of the genre. Mini-games are fine in a stand-alone game, but 'party' titles are just a home for mediocre one-dimensional games thrown together to make one bigger mediocre game.

Unlike chest sizes, we crave quality, not quantity. And as far as Fuzion Frenzy goes, it may be faster and slicker-looking than the laborious MP3, but the mini-games aren't nearly as inspired or entertaining.

GLADIATORS READY!

Set in a futuristic dark metropolis, this Brit-made game is a manic four-player experience. Imagine TV show Gladiators set in Power Stone-esque arenas, and populated by futuristic street-chic dudes and dudettes of a Jet Set vibe and you get the picture. Sort of.

There are 45 games in total, but it's still not value for money. Though the games vary in style, throwing rhythm action, racing, beat 'em up, and a few other genres your way, you soon realise that the concept and objectives in most games are strikingly similar – splat most bugs to win (Rude Food), scoop up token for points (Air Raid), capture most command points (Tank Tangle), and collect most pods (Space Tails).

Then there are the race games – complete three laps first to win (Roller Ruckus), complete five laps to win (Bumper Race), and then again the super-original task of completing three laps first to win (Tank Tracks). Notice the pattern emerging? Yawn...

You get to bomb around in tanks, nudge other players off waterfalls and blow people up with remote-controlled bombs. But we expect more from Microsoft's next-gen.

CVG RECKONS

The visuals are half-decent, but the gameplay is ultimately repetitive and uninspired.

4/10

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Your chance to win the ultimate footie gaming package!

It's the most successful football franchise the world has ever seen and you lot can't get enough of it. To celebrate the launch of FIFA Football 2002 we've teamed up with Electronic Arts to satisfy your deepest football gaming desires. Three soccer-mad CVG readers will win not only a copy of FIFA Football 2002 each, but also a machine to play it on.

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You've got three chances to win. Third prize is a PSone and a copy of FIFA 2002 worth £120. Second prize is a PS2 with a copy of FIFA 2002, worth £245. The lucky first-prize winner gets a Packard Bell PC worth a whopping £1,000 and a copy of FIFA 2002 worth £30. Check out the stats of the winner's PC:

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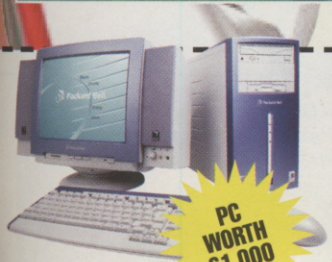

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WHAT THE SCORES MEAN

1 – Argh, it stinks!
2 – Abysmal
3 – Sucks a fat one
4 – Pretty dire
5 – Very average
6 – Hmm, could be for you
7 – Pretty tasty
8 – Very good
9 – Essential
10 – An unmissable belter that defines the genre

CVG CLASSIC AWARD

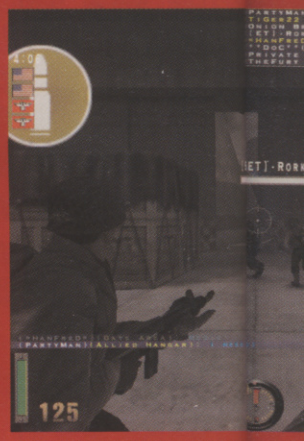
Only given to the very best games, setting the benchmark others in the genre are compared against. An essential purchase for every gamer.

It's fried chicken night down in the catacombs. Guess who's the chicken...

MULTIPLE MASSACRES

The three multiplayer modes are all teamplay and include a Domination-style option, as well as our fave, an objective-based affair. Everyone chooses a player class with different weapons, such as a lieutenant who can call in airstrikes, and then you get stuck in. When you die you can wait half a minute to respawn, but medics bring you back instantly.

If you've at least three players per side, it's wicked with big, well-designed levels requiring real teamwork. But with only a few of you or a useless team, it sucks. Being an id shooter, though, there'll soon be 1,000 cool new mods for it online.



Your team always respawns

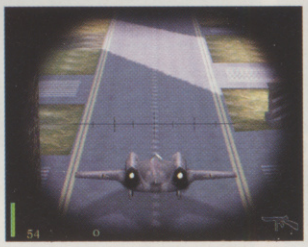
Return To Castle Wolfenstein

Hitler's only got one ball – the other was bitten off by a rabid zombie

Tracer rounds zip past your ear

The good-old silenced Sten SMG is a great stealth weapon

Based on a real-life secret jet



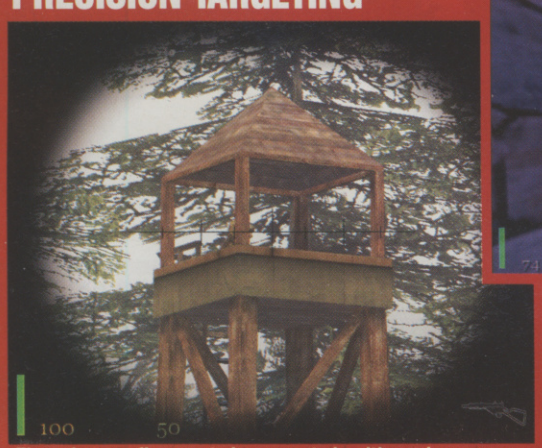
COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-32**
DEVELOPER: **ID/GM/NERVE**
PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**

Most would agree the Nazis were a pretty disagreeable lot. But even they stopped short of raising the dead from their graves. Or did they? In Return To Castle Wolfenstein's screwed-up version of WWII events the fiendish SS, not content with invasion, pillaging and genocide, attempt to harness the powers of the undead to further the cause of the Third Reich. You can hear the SS Major now: "Ve haf vays off making you walk. Again."

The year is 1943. The SS Paranormal Division is excavating ancient ruins near a German castle searching for the secrets of the legendary Dark Knights, a Teutonic religious order of immense power. Two Allied agents gathering intelligence nearby are captured and banged up in Castle Wolfenstein. You guessed it. One of them is you and with the aid of a knife and later all manner of captured weapons it's time to break out and get some payback.

Return To Castle Wolfenstein runs on a tuned-up Quake III engine, and on a powerful PC looks a treat for it. Close up, the faces of the soldiers you slaughter look amazing. Fat, drunken Germans, weather-beaten resistance members, saucy Frauleins, the lot. The level of detail when you yank up the graphic options is

PRECISION TARGETING



The only sure-fire way to be accurate is with a sniper scope, which is also useful for scouting ahead. Otherwise, use binocs

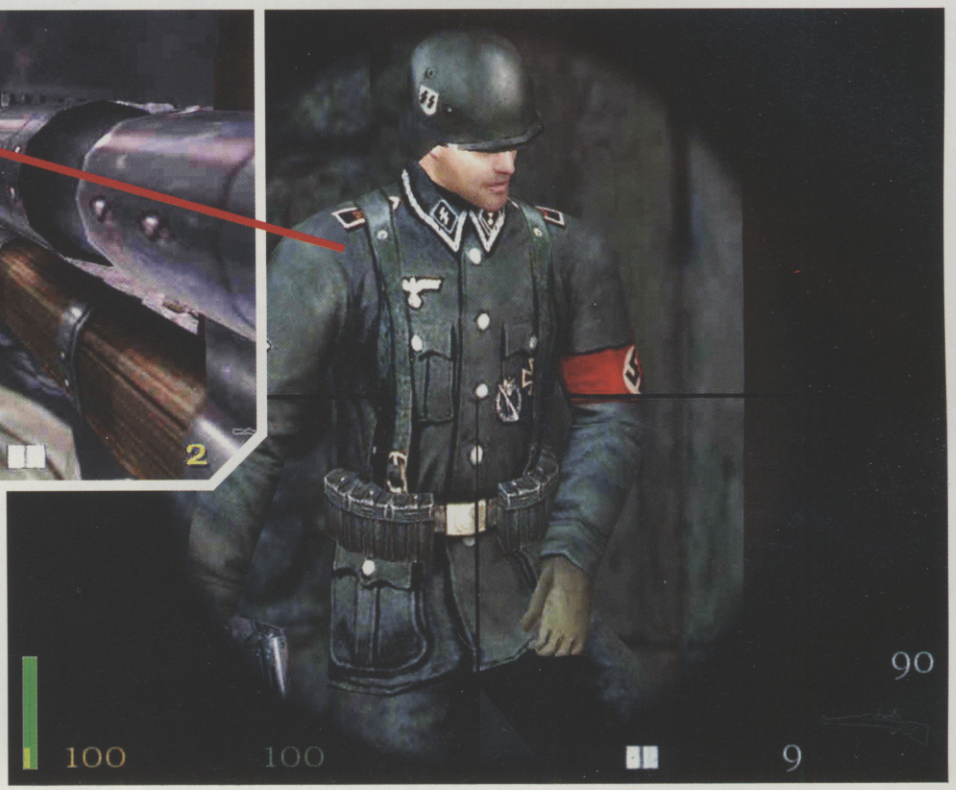
Firing on the move is innaccurate

The circle around the central dot that acts as your crosshair shows where you're likely to hit, as these old weapons are not 100% accurate. Some guns are deadlier than others and have smaller circles. Fire on the move or give long bursts of auto fire and the circle grows, simulating your lack of control over your shooting.

Bullets bounce off these guys' shields, so adapt your tactics to beat 'em

Zoom in with the right sniper rifle...

Take over enemy machine-gun nests



...to see what the guards are up to. Some of their behaviour is awesome, like this guy who's standing round bored, scratching his balls! Others chat, smoke and get shouted at by officers who spot them dossing

staggering, and bucket-loads of period atmosphere pour from every polygon. The posters on the walls are scans from old prints from the 1940s, cobwebs cling to door frames in the castle and Nazi military paraphernalia litters the place.

NOT FOR PACIFISTS

Despite the attention to detail, don't get the idea that this is Band Of Brothers on a games CD-ROM. This is more the Rambo-like stuff of those old comic books where a lone Tommy slays Nazis by the bunkerful, winning the war single-handed and is home in time for tea. And it's all the more fun for it – there's more action here than in a year of Hollywood blockbusters.

Tracer rounds cut the air around you, ricocheting bullets ping off walls and grim faces light up in the flare of automatic gunfire. Helmets get shot off, blood splatters on walls and dying soldiers crumple in heaps, fall down stairs and off lookout posts. Get hold of the flame-thrower and you'll love the way it fills rooms with its incinerating fire, leaving smouldering corpses littering the floor.

There's something about WWII that makes re-enacting it in games irresistible. Maybe it's the weapons – hell, you can keep your M16s, AK47s and M60s, guns were cooler in those days and had names like Thompson, Browning and Luger. Admittedly, it made an infantry squad's armaments sound like a solicitors' firm. But while they may not have been able to help with your alimony case, they sure could sort out your funeral arrangements.

HOUR OF THE HUNDEAD

But as everyone knows by now, it isn't just Nazis you kill in RTCW. If you've seen From Dusk Till Dawn, you'll know what's coming next – the undead. That's right, just as you're really getting into putting holes in Hans and filling Lars full of lead, along comes a bunch of brain-hungry zombies and assorted undead horrors,

Up close, the flamethrower toasts almost anything moving

Elite paras drop in to hunt you down. Gulp!...

...But you massacre them coming up a ladder

inadvertently resurrected by the SS. Which means just about all bases are covered when it comes to everyone's favourite things to blow away. Apart from aliens. Some may have been happier had it stuck to reality a little more, but no-one can doubt the sheer sadistic fun of watching a room full of jack-booted stormtroopers fighting for their lives against a napalm-puking zombie warrior.

While there's the odd puzzle, the occasional bit of platforming and a couple of stealth levels chucked in, this is good old-fashioned bullet-riddled action at its best. And what helps make the brainless slaughter so enjoyable is the artificial intelligence. Okay, this lot aren't going to outsmart you at chess and are prone to dumbass stuff such as not noticing when your sniper bullets are pinging off the wall around their head. But they mostly react convincingly. They take cover to reload, retreat from your fire to summon reinforcements or sound the alarm, and run away from the grenades you lob at them. Sometimes they do even cooler stuff like boot your grenades right back at you, kick tables over to take cover behind and find alternate routes to sneak up on you in the heat of battle.

There are a few big boss monsters to sort out

Deep into the game you meet some fearsome foes

GUNG-HO HO HO

Fun as it is, it's not truely original and doesn't take the genre anywhere very new. There are classic scenes re-enacted from war films (the cable-car ride from the castle is out of Where Eagles Dare while the beach invasion multiplayer level is Saving Private Ryan). Not to mention the touches lifted from certain other first-person shooters, in particular Half-Life (riding the underground tram and watching paratroopers dropping in to hunt you).

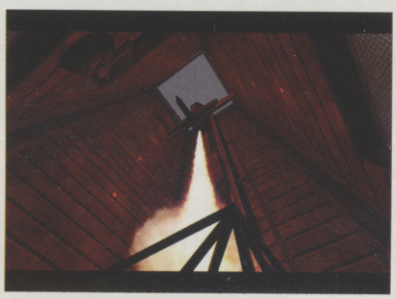
You'll need a powerful PC to get the best out of it, and even then, you can complete it over a weekend. But while it lasts, it's a blinding romp and will make you wish your great granddad was still around so you could ask him how many zombies he notched up during the Big One.

Electro death is coming

These elite guards rock

Deathshead, the twisted Nazi fanatic behind this madness

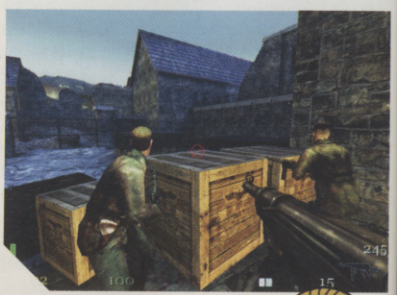
No secret areas or treasure here? Bogus


Cutscenes move the plot along nicely

CVG FACT

According to Wolfenstein 3D, Capt Blazkowicz survives the war to become a TV talkshow host in Milwaukee. Quick, kill him.

In some missions you work with others



OTT? Not at all. But kill any civvies and it's Game Over

GERMANS VS ZOMBIES

Some of the best moments come early on when you and a load of Germans get sealed in the ancient catacombs beneath a cursed church they've been excavating.

You overhear a group of panicking Nazis preparing themselves for yet another onslaught. You peek in and then the firing starts as the zombies pile in. At first you figure "It's gotta be humans versus the rest here" and join in on the Germans' side. But when the battle's over, those damn Huns turn their guns on you. So next time you're smarter, playing one off against the other.

Nazi vs zombie fight ahoy!

You pile in to help the Hun

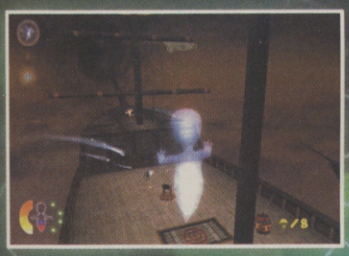
Oh-oh, now it's just you against the rest

CVG RECKONS

It won't change your world, but it'll make it a lot more fun. Steve

9

If you like this try these...
AVP2 (PC), Half-Life (PS2)



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PlayStation 2

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James Bond 007 In..

The guns, the girls – you can't go far wrong as the man himself

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-4**
DEVELOPER: **EA**
PUBLISHER: **EA**

Since Rare made GoldenEye for the N64 (voted fifth in CVG readers' top 100 games of all time), Bond games have had a lot to live up to. On PSone, they sucked Blofeld's soiled kecks, but now Bond has arrived on PS2 and, as usual, he's just in time to save the day.

But you won't be blasting and quipping your way through one of the movie plots this time. A whole new story will see you infiltrating the Malprave organisation on a mission to stop a sinister plan to kill all the world's leaders and replace them with menacing clones – with the help of one or two secret service hotties, of course. What would a Bond game be without them?

Depending on whether you're a cool stealth cat or a hot-headed gun nut, you can sneak around or go in all guns blazing – it's up to you on most levels. Either way will result in gunfights, explosions and tearful funerals for dozens of evil henchmen.

The storyline's filled out with top cutscenes, just like the sort of stuff that happens in the movies. The first time Bond cocks an eyebrow, you won't be able to stifle a grin. It's all so familiar – the only difference is that this time, you're the one in the line of fire.

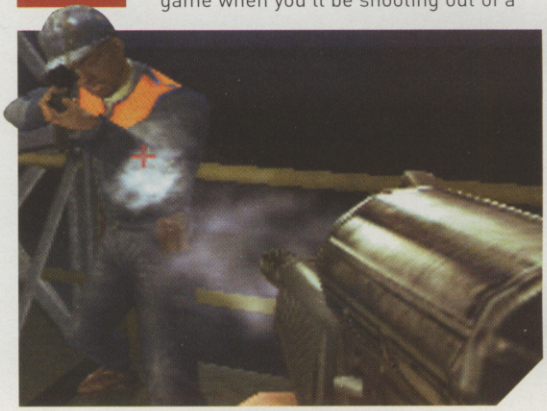
CVG FACT

Agent Under Fire started life as a PS2 version of The World is Not Enough, using the Quake 3 engine.

WE'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU

Although you'll be seeing most of the action from inside Bond's head, there are a couple of driving levels which allow you to make the most of 007's legendary recklessness on the road. There are also two occasions in the game when you'll be shooting out of a moving vehicle. The first comes when you're travelling through the streets of Hong Kong, and the second when you're in the depths of Malprave's underwater base. These episodes make for a great break in the action, but they're actually pretty short and it's the first-person levels that you'll find yourself coming back to again and again.

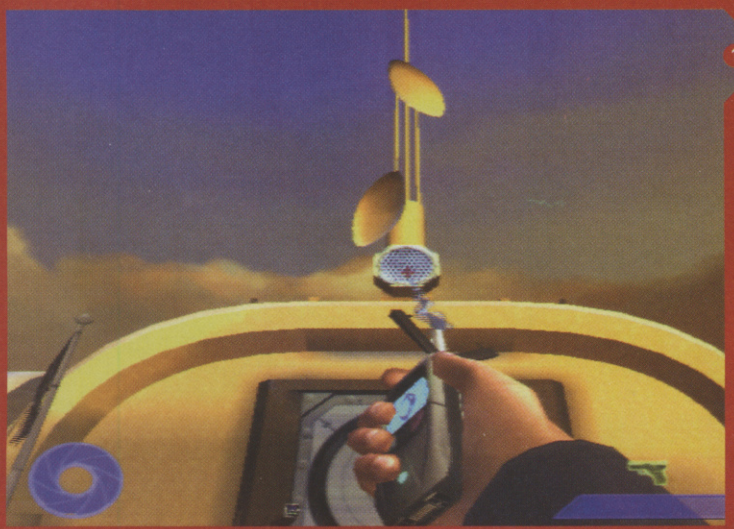
One of the best innovations is the introduction of special 'Bond moves' throughout each level. Do something clever or daring that only Bond himself would do, and you're rewarded with a blast of the Bond theme tune, just like in the films. It's a real challenge to hunt them all out and when you pull one off, you really feel like a bit of a superspy.

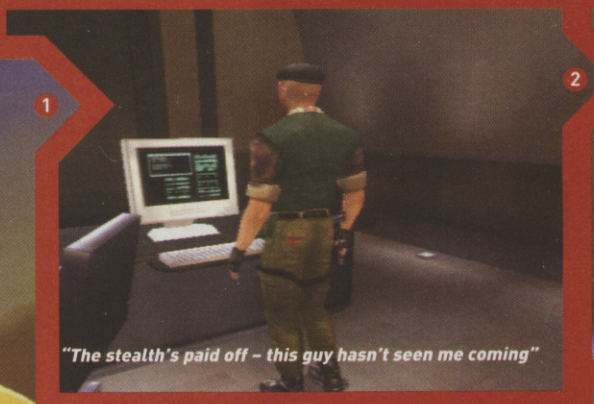


His wife will never see him again. Sniff sniff

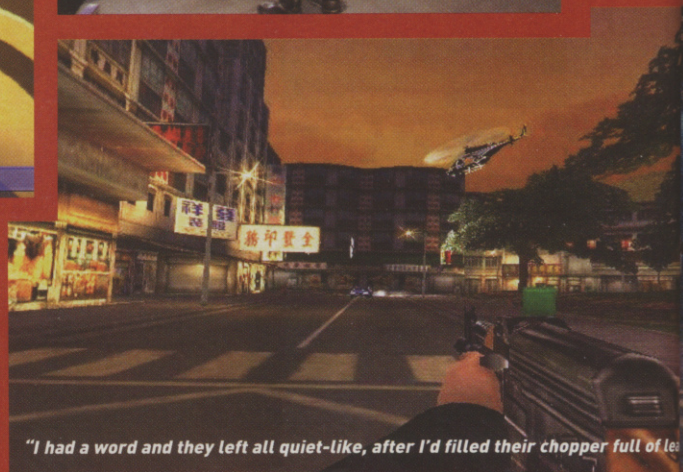
Nice decor, shame about the armed men

"The Q-Claw got me to the top of the building – nice work"





"The stealth's paid off – this guy hasn't seen me coming"



"I had a word and they left all quiet-like, after I'd filled their chopper full of le

A DAY IN THE LIFE

"Dear Diary, today was another boring day in my job as a secret agent. When will I get a chance to do something interesting like stamp collecting or gardening for a change? This time, I had to infiltrate some secret bio-weapons facility and get out without being shot – ho hum!

Sometimes I think that M wants to get rid of me. She keeps saying I'm past it and sends me on all these dangerous missions! At least I had R's secret gadgets to play with, but it wasn't exactly an easy ride. Mind you, I did meet a nice girl. Isn't it good when you can socialise during your job? Here's how my day went..."

...n... Agent Under Fire

Die, shrinking limb villain. Not the best character model...

Inside evil villain Malprave's base. You know what to do

SHAKEN, NOT BLURRED

Everything's in pin-sharp detail, and while the looks can't match up to spy rival Metal Gear Solid 2 in terms of sheer style, they're every bit as detailed.

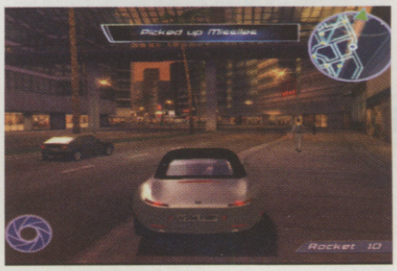
It's not difficult to get to grips with, either. EA has wisely chosen to use a control system that's a bit different from the usual PS2 first-person shooter. You move and turn with the left analogue stick, and look up and down and strafe with the right. It might seem a bit unwieldy to experts, but it means you can pick up and play using just the left stick, thanks to some nice autotargeting.

You'll need it for the multiplayer modes, where there are up to three of your mates out to make you dead. There's not just the usual deathmatch – there's also Protect the Flag, a bomb-disarming game and a great mission where one player tries to protect a non-player character and another has to assassinate him, with the two players swapping roles every so often. Sweet as.

The chink in Bond's armour is that the game's a little too short in single-player mode. However, the varied multiplayer missions more than make up for this little foible.

Agent Under Fire really does continue the legacy of GoldenEye into the next generation. Let's hope this is just the beginning of a whole new franchise for Mr Bond, because we can't get enough of this sort of spy-'em-up. Evil geniuses of the world – bring it on!

Tokyo city's in trouble. Save it now!



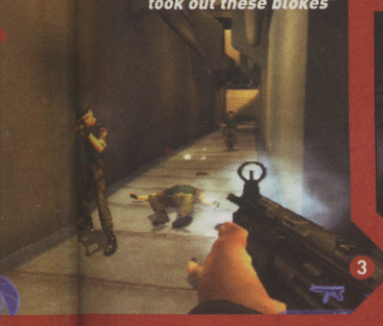
CVG RECKONS

One of the PS2's best action games, and you get to be Bond... We'll take it! **Joff**

8

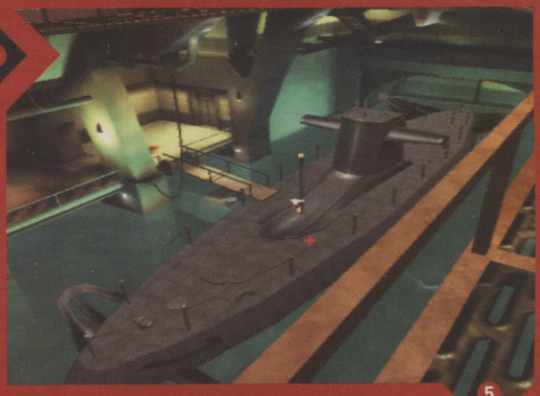
If you like this try these...
Red Faction (PS2), GoldenEye (N64)

"Stole some weapons and took out these blokes"

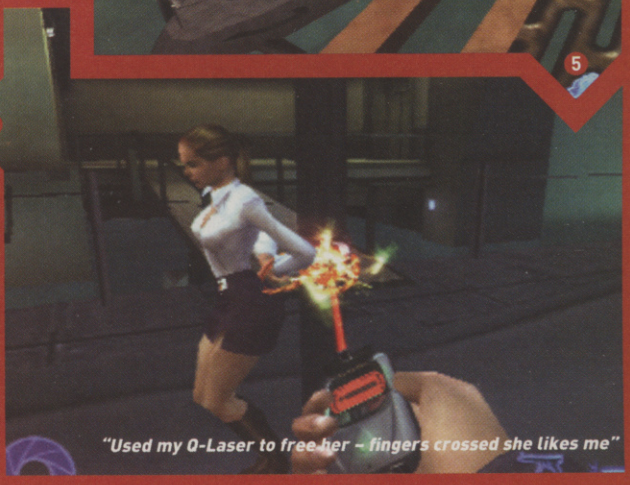


"Turning out the lights didn't help them much. Bok!"

"Spotted a bird on a sub and went down to rescue her"



"Took her for a drive, but some hoodlums started making trouble"



"Used my Q-Laser to free her – fingers crossed she likes me"

Jak And Daxter

Bounce, bounce and be happy

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **NAUGHTY DOG**
PUBLISHER: **SONY**

There's something amazingly satisfying about bouncing: a simple rubber ball can offer hours of entertainment, and watching Kelly Brook ride a bike down a cobbled street is a heavenly pastime.

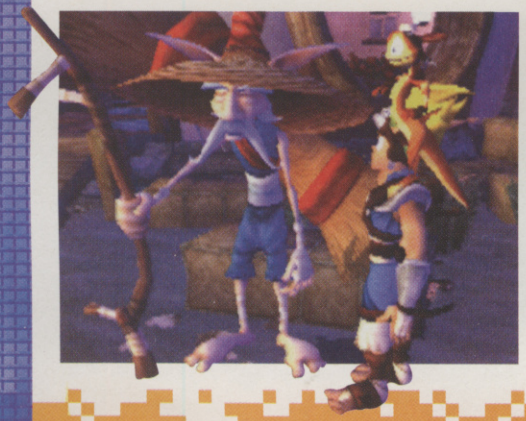
But the finest experience has to be controlling a bounce-happy hero in a stunning platform game. Look at the many years of pure joy Mario, Sonic, and Rayman (yes!) have brought us. Well, the guys at Naughty Dog have taken note of our love for all things big and bouncy, combining the two to bring us a 3D gem in the form of Jak and Daxter.

Weasley Daxter is your comedy sidekick. If you think he looks weird, wait until you meet dudes like this

INDIANA JAK

You leap across a rickety wooden bridge that links two gigantic land masses together, duff up a giant snake, get chased by a gang of huge sharp-toothed piranha, make your way up through a castle packed with moving platforms, then duke it out with a massive killer plant. Bok! That's the kind of action we all look for in a 3D platformer. Explore an enormous seamless world, battle cool, crazy enemies, tackle brain-teasing puzzles and feel totally at one with the smooth controls and fantastically flexible movements of your hero.

Help out this farmer and earn a Power Cell



Nutty monsters are *everywhere*

BOUNCE, BOUNCE BABY

The basic gameplay is structured around collecting Power Cells, each of which can be obtained by completing a challenge. Though the world of J&D is huge, it's split into areas – like Geyser Rock and Misty Island – each of which is littered with objectives. Other major platformers on PS2 like Klonoa 2 and Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath Of Cortex are cool but on rails, while J&D offers a 3D and free-roaming experience with addictive gameplay. Okay, so it doesn't boast the originality or sheer genius of, say, Super Mario 64, but it's still the best bouncy game to appear on PS2 so far.

ALL THE RIGHT MOVES

J&D has all the components of a classy platform game. It presents us with a many layered and hugely colourful world, is packed with awesome characters, cooks up some cool slapstick humour and is simple and intuitive to play. Did we forget to say how fun it is too? Well, it is.

The environments are rammed full of breathtaking detail and brilliantly crafted obstacles

There's plenty of classic platform action, such as leaping between moving blocks

CVG RECKONS

Tight gameplay, sweet visuals, but not original enough to score higher. Mike

8

If you like this try these...
Klonoa 2 (PS2), Mario 64 (N64)

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **APPALOOSA**
PUBLISHER: **SONY**

Ecco The Dolphin: Defender Of The Future

Our mammal mate makes waves on PS2

Ecco is like the anti-videogame game. Gentle, peaceful with very little violence. It's all about self-preservation and reuniting the world in peace, and using your brains, not brawn.

But most of all it's about love. Love for your PS2, love for Sega finally releasing games on it (Appaloosa is Sega owned), and love for the genius development team and its stunning creation. Nearly two years after its Dreamcast release, Ecco remains original and genuinely awe-inspiring. It's also flawed. Whoops.

CVG FACT

Two secret 2D levels from the very first Mega Drive Ecco adventure are hidden away in the game for you to find

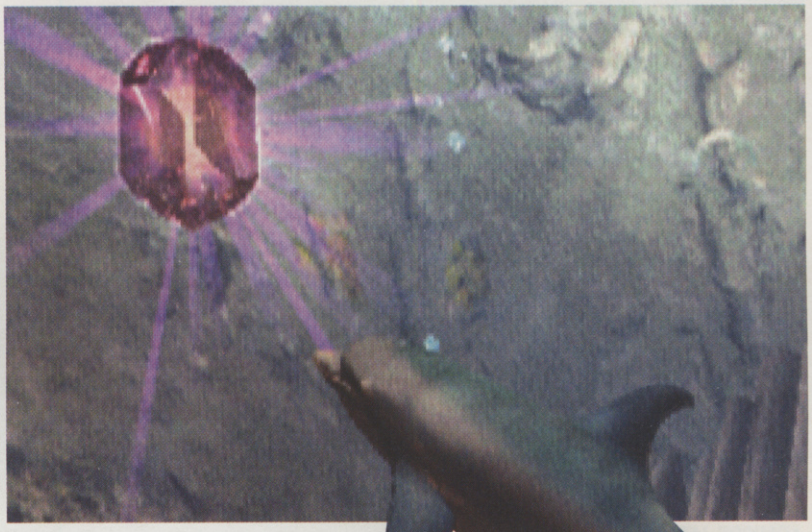
GREASY BLOWHOLE

Controlling a dolphin in a game brings with it its own quirks and a brand new set of gaming skills to master. Learning how to navigate is the biggest initial hurdle, and the complete freedom and speed of control is daunting at first. Luckily there's a brand new map feature on PS2 to help you, as well as a 3D on-screen compass.

The underwater setting means that the structure of puzzles is skewed and strange. Everything is witnessed from a dolphin's perspective and the in-game logic veers between bizarre and downright unfathomable. Extra clues and hints are included in this version to help players out, but it's still not quite enough to stop the frustration bubbling up in later levels.

Ecco is dreamy and looks and sounds gorgeous. You absolutely need to play it, but the sad truth is that you probably won't be able to finish it.

The pink glyph stones are new to PlayStation 2. They're special as they give you hints



This is the brand new gallery where you can watch movies and hear music from the game. The sights and sounds are top

Sonar the glyph for hints

Rock painting with a puzzle

Behind the octopus lurks a cave of secrets

CVG RECKONS

Still obscure and difficult in places but there's nothing else like it on Earth. Lee

8

If you like this try this...
Rez (PS2, DC)

DOLPHINS IN SPACE!

It's the future and Dolphins and mankind have started to explore the galaxy together in harmony. Meanwhile, a mysterious alien force known as The Foe fancies turning Earth into its new stomping ground and the few caretaker dolphins that remain are under threat. By messing around with the past, The Foe is trying to interrupt the peaceful relationship forged between dolphins and humans and it's Ecco's mission to travel between The Foe's alternate realities, putting right what's been made wrong.

Evil alien force The Foe's craft explode magnificently as they try to enter Earth's atmosphere from Space

The vortex creates the alternate realities. Yikes

Ecco flies through time as the offbeat story unfolds

Battle Realms

Crouching Tiger meets Red Alert – good move

COST: **£29.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-8**
DEVELOPER: **LIQUID ENTERTAINMENT**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**

With games like Z: Steel Soldiers and Red Alert 2, the real-time strategy genre is hardly lacking in big hitters. You need something pretty impressive to stand out, and unlike Real War (see p97), Battle Realms has innovation and style.

ARMY OF JACKIE CHANS

Set in Japan, BR mixes humour with the more traditional combat and resource management. What's cool is the attention to detail: throw units into battle and they don't just perform one move repeatedly, they fight like they really want to win. Ground troops look like something out of a martial arts movie with weapons and fists flying realistically, while ranged weapons are used intelligently by other units.

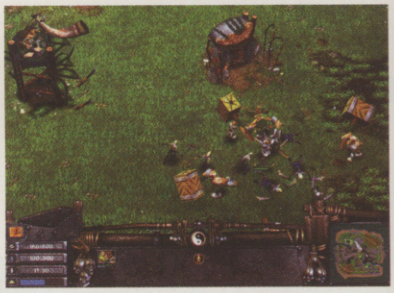
The only micro management you have to do in battle is keep your special units fixed on particular targets. Resource management revolves around paddy fields and water, with peasants harvesting rice and needing to train to become fighters. They can be evolved through several stages of training, so the number and variety of units available to you outstrips most such games. Mixing and matching them into battle groups is key to victory.

BR is stylish and offers something different from the add-ons and updates disguised as sequels plaguing this genre. You don't feel like you're being asked to account for every grain of rice, leaving more time for tactical stuff like ambushes. Which means it's actually fun.

Melee troops need to rush the large weapons before they annihilate your town and water supplies

Swordsmen rush in while ranged fighters hang back

The Lotus tribe takes a pounding from the Wolf tribe



Little blokes twatting each other – funny

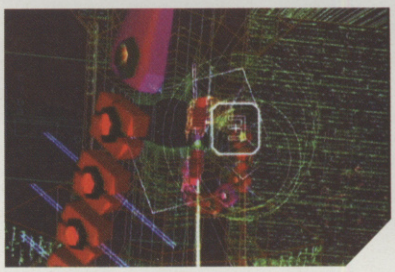
CVG RECKONS

Loads of fresh ideas to keep you interested. Jap slapping strategy at its best. **Les**

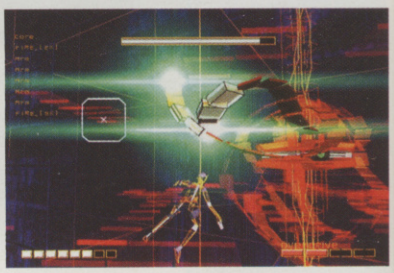
8

If you like this try these...
C&C Red Alert 2 (PC)

Rez

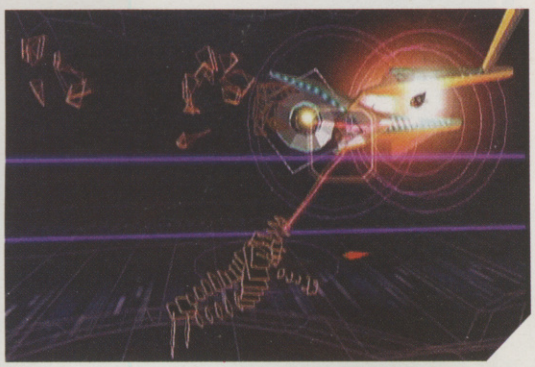


Shoot the big red fishy snake thing! Rez is trippier than a hippy's mushroom sarnie



The future-retro look is fully awesome. If you like that kind of thing...

Get that clubland feeling without wearing a stupid beanie hat



Sometimes the camera shifts to the side like this

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **SEGA**
PUBLISHER: **SONY**

Rez is just how the videogames of the future are meant to look – if you're living in the eighties, that is. It's all wire frames and flat polygons, awash with digitised explosions and big fat pixels. But despite its curious retro-futuristic look, the game still manages to drop the occasional jaw – and not just with its mental visuals.

MUSIC SOUNDS BETTER

The gameplay is basic into-the-screen third-person 3D blasting. But with one innovative addition – sound. As you blast enemies, the sounds of their explosions are added to the techno/trance soundtrack. And as you shoot special items, more and more layers are added to both the soundtrack and the backgrounds you fly through. It's original and mind-blowing for a few hours, and the shooting action is playable enough and the boss battles are awesome, but the gameplay won't hold your attention forever. Then again, it isn't really meant to. Rez is aimed squarely at the post-pub, pre-club, slightly head-mashed crowd and as such is the perfect fix.

If you could photograph dreams

Attack of the shuttlecocks

CVG RECKONS

Original, playable and super-trendy, but you'll have seen it all before long. **Lee**

7

If you like this try these...
Gradius Advance (GBA)

Creep through the bushes and take that man down

See how awesome you were in Replay

Thank God for sniper sights. Aim for his eye

COST: **£29.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-16 (ONLINE)**
DEVELOPER: **RED STORM**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**

Ghost Recon

Be a soldier. But not a fun videogame soldier

You're a soldier in the open countryside. There are enemies out there somewhere. You creep along the bottom of a steep hill. Not dead. You crawl out from the cover and hide in some bushes. Not dead. You stand up for a better look around. Dead.

SHOOT ON SIGHT

Ghost Recon is a realistic war game. No health bars, finite ammo, and little clue of where the enemy is. You're in charge of three squads, creeping into occupied territory to shoot bad guys and free hostages. Every footstep is fraught with danger; each mission has you hitting Quicksave like a madman after a few steps. It's very well done, but not that much fun.

A scanner shows you the general direction of enemies, but you still need hawk eyes. In the wide-open levels it's annoying as you're never at ease with your position. Your squad mates will fire on anyone they spot, but they're relying on you to lead. You'd be more willing to keep trying if the levels are interesting, which is why the shootout in Moscow's Red Square is infinitely more fun to replay than the boring countryside missions.

ON THE JOB

Fifteen missions are run through in linear order, but they're surviveable rather than enjoyable. Ghost Recon's painfully steep learning curve means it is less satisfying than the realistic action of Operation Flashpoint, where you feel part of a larger effort and can learn on the job.

The Russian dissident uprising plot is believable, and the different abilities of the soldiers come across well. You'll love the sniper with his big zoom sight, because it makes up for the fact that no-one on your team ever remembers the binoculars. And these guys are supposed to be elite? They can't climb or jump either, not even a bit.

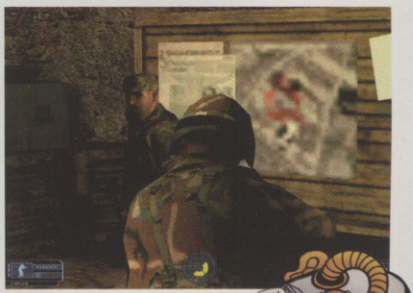
CVG FACT

Red Storm boss Tom Clancy is a best-selling novelist who recognised the power of games to tell a war story.

Santa went nuts 'cos they weren't asleep

Ghost Recon isn't really all that gory

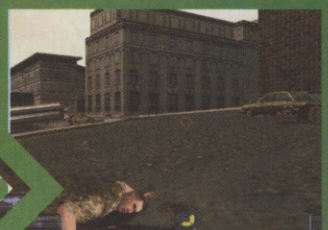
Capture the bearded terrorist leader



LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

This game's predecessor, Rogue Spear, was interesting despite the fierce difficulty curve. Why? The levels. There was a shootout in a museum, on a plane and in Kosovo – all realistic settings. Ghost Recon has a couple of brilliant urban levels, but also its fair share of boring fields.

"These outdoor missions are a bit of a snore. I'll just fetch a pillow and a blanket while the game loads..."



Urban warfare – now you're talking. More of this would've been mint

CVG RECKONS

A great soldier simulator, but it's rock hard and isn't fun enough. Dean

7

If you like this try this...
Operation Flashpoint (PC)

Baldur's

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **SNOWBLIND STUDIOS**
PUBLISHER: **INTERPLAY**

Long before Final Fantasy, role-playing games were enjoyed without joypads on bits of paper. Dice were rolled to see if Tweeg The Unhealthy would smite the angry dwarf with his +2 Anal Chafer broadsword. Players would congregate in secret because the stigma of being into Dungeons & Dragons was very severe.

Thank God for Cloud Strife, eh? We can put that dark chapter in the history of humanity behind us now. Well, not quite. The latest RPG for PS2 uses these nerdy

CVG FACT

The original Baldur's Gate was released on PC in 1999. It was a massive, statistic-heavy quest. The gameplay was completely overhauled for the all-action PS2 version.

The dungeons look great, with torches giving off heat haze and

Stay out of the wolf sanctuary

Riding dragon

Get yourself down to the local hostelry and see what's happening. Mrs Cribbins is knocking off the milkman? Crikey. Maybe the serving wench has more useful gossip...

FEELING ADVENTUROUS?

Look, you can't just wander into some dungeons and start hitting things with sticks. What good will that do anybody? No, every hero needs a quest, and where better to hear some outlandish tales than the local pub? Get down there and see what's happening. It's also a good place to go and look at ladies' wobbly bits, just like in real life.

1 *Start adventuring in the cellar?*

4 *Then go kill some stuff*

3 *Okay, but first, tool yourself up proper like*

At the end of each dungeon there's a big nasty boss character to slay. Kick his ass, pick up lots of gold and head back to the pub to see where the next action is at

s Gate: Dark Alliance

Miles of dungeon teaming with evil awaits you – with a big sword

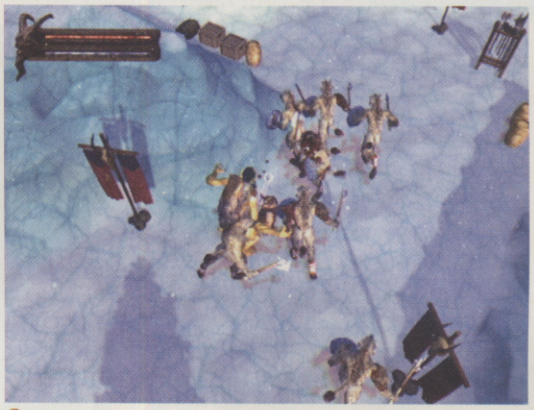
systems as its backbone. We should have smashed Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance into bits the second it arrived. Good job we never. It kicks a fair amount of ass.

NO MORE BORING STATS

The cleverest thing it does is hide away those geeky facts and figures. What you experience is a chap cutting a bloody swathe through dungeons, not a brain-melting geeky stat attack. Skeletons run at you, you mash the attack button, and they collapse in a pile of bones on the floor. What should be clunky and dull actually works as a better arcade hack and slash than Gauntlet Legends.

The first choice you make determines how the combat unfolds for the whole game. Play as dwarf warrior Kromlech and you kill with weapons, not magic. Adrianna the sorceress can light up a room with magic fire, but will look at your blankly if you chuck her a two-handed broad sword. Vahn the Ranger does a bit of both, but prefers to use a bow.

Then you wander off on your quest and start killing things. Every dungeon you enter has tons of nasties roaming about, all animated brilliantly. Skeletons stagger, kobolds scurry like rats and the undead come after you once you've hacked their limbs to the floor. Visually the game is impressive, considering the viewpoint. Torches flicker and give off heat haze, water ripples convincingly and corpses lie wherever you finished them off.



The animation and behaviour of the beasts is brilliant

plenty of menacing shadows. Take a friend in with you

Baldur's Gate Kart anyone?

The infamous Forest of Vomit

The Yeti ice hockey team

The obligatory ice level. Well done

Grab items and treasure as you fight

The levels are vast, so you've got to keep an eye on the map as you slash through the bad guys. The simplistic warrior combat can get repetitive, but that's to be expected. If you were trapped underground with a horde of predatory demons, you'd be swinging your axe pretty wildly. Olympic standard fencing isn't really an option. The skill to picking off enemies with ranged weapons and magic is different, but basically boils down to sprinting around until you find the room to turn, fire and run on.

CLUED UP AND READY TO GO

You can buy or find health potions, using them at to stave off death, and your characters regenerate health slowly, whatever they're doing. But no matter who you play as you'll sometimes find yourself out of potions, running circuits around large rooms pursued by a pack of enemies in order to buy enough time to regenerate enough to fight them.

Dungeon quests invariably involve retrieving objects, which in turn lead to a boss battle. There are a few puzzle elements, but you always get given clues by your allies in and around the town of Baldur's Gate itself. Any perverts will be delighted to hear that practically every female has big jiggly breasts. Even better, you can strip Adrianna to her pants in the inventory screen. Us? We prefer to ogle the dwarf in his smalls.

Given the nature of the source material, levelling up has to come into play sooner or later. Rather than get sucked into the stat black hole, it's a simple matter of selecting skills to boost up. Then it's back to the killing.

BALDUR'S MATE

The game isn't massive, but that fits nicely with the feeling that this is more arcade game than hardcore role-player. Also, how many RPGs have a mint co-op two-player mode? This does, and mixing ranged and melee characters works well when you're hacking up dungeons. The entire game can be played in this way, but you share a screen so you can't really afford to argue about which way to run from the evil knights.

It all adds up to a good crack. Serious D&D-ers might think it's a bit lightweight, but for action-minded gamers this is a great way to get started in RPGs. No big heads, no spiky hair and no reams of text to read when you want a fight – just lots of running about in dungeons and killing things. And that's what being an adventurer's all about, isn't it?

is the future

Behold my mystical glowing weapons

CVG RECKONS

Geek frenzy Dungeons & Dragons boiled down to the fun stuff – exploring and killing. Dean

8

If you like this try this...
Diablo 2 (PC)

The Mummy Returns

Trying to squeeze into Lara's tight vest

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **BLITZ GAMES**
PUBLISHER: **VIVENDI UNIVERSAL**

It's just not Christmas without Tomb Raider, is it? Watching Lara fall into holes any other games character would have the agility to jump first time, her spine snapping just as Mum calls you to eat some burnt turkey. Except not this year – what *will* you do? The Mummy Returns might do as a substitute.

It's got dank catacombs, flaming torches and twin handgun action. Lots of twin handgun action. The locations may ape Lara, but the gameplay is more action-orientated. Rick O'Connell has to stop the advance of the evil Scorpion King by shooting lots of zombies and chaps in red turbans while wandering around solving puzzles. Need four orbs to open up the Scorpion King's lair? They'll be scattered in the four corners of the current level. Off you go then.

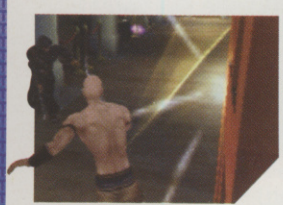
CVG FACT

The developers claim to have built the most realistic and detailed computer model of The Rock in any game. He appears here as the Scorpion King, and doesn't do The People's Elbow.

That chap's got a nice sword. Kill him and you can strip it from his corpse. Swish!

Soul sucking puts skin on Imhotep's bones. Yum yum

Put some clothes on



The bloke in the chair becomes a zombie's lunch

All sounds pretty formulaic, yes? Actually, it's alright. Being able to play as either the good or bad character from the movie is a bonus for a start. Combat is more like an arcade game than an adventure. Grab your weapon and wade in. Smash the X button to fire pistol rounds or swing your sword. You can also strip weapons off anyone you kill, or pick up mummy legs you've hacked off and hit people with them.

LEADER OF THE PACK

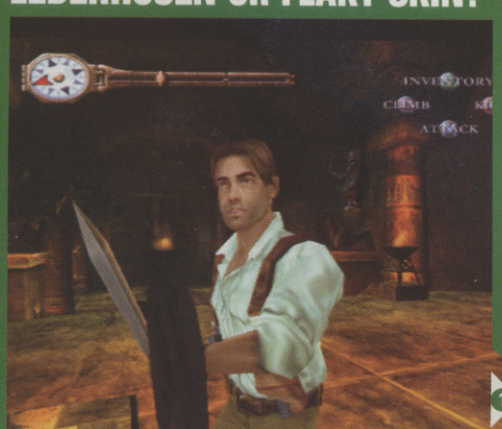
Another nice touch is that reanimated mummy soldiers aren't fussy who they fight. If you lure them into a pack of your human enemies, they'll quite happily chew off their faces instead of yours.

Enemy AI isn't up to much though, and you happily gallop around the levels with a conga of enemies following like sheep. The control system is a bit clunky, with the jump command only appearing as you reach the very edge of a precipice. The levels look alright, but a bit samey. This makes them fiddly to navigate, and it's a pain to call up the map.

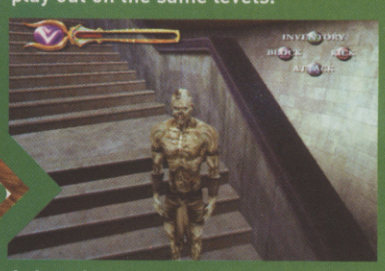
Fans of the movie will enjoy it lots, but the rest of us should be looking towards the more stylish Devil May Cry for our action-game-pretending-to-be-an-adventure thrills.

LEDERHOSEN OR FLAKY SKIN?

It's not an original idea to offer more than one playable character in an adventure game, but this game does it with more originality than most. As well as playing lederhosen-wearing hero character Rick O'Connell, you can also play the game as soul-sucking uber zombie dude Imhotep. The two adventures are different, but play out on the same levels.



Rick cleverly brings his wife and kid on the adventure, so the baddies have a better choice of who to kidnap



Imhotep's got guts – but they're in his tomb

CVG RECKONS

Tomb Raider meets Fighting Force in a half decent movie game. Playing as the bad guy is a nice touch. **Dean**

6

If you like this try these...
Devil May Cry (PS2)

Championship Manager Quiz

Find out how much you don't know about the beautiful game

COST: **£24.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **SPORTS INTERACTIVE**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**

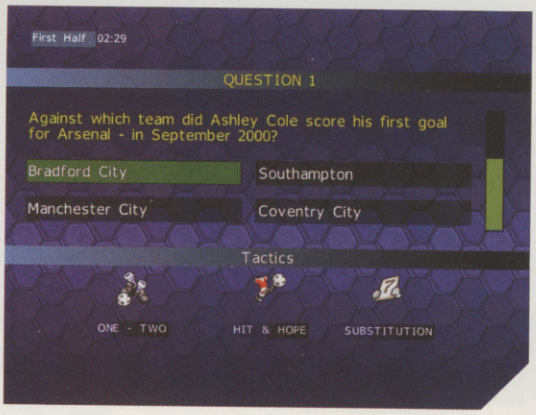
Championship Manager is the Arsene Wenger of footy manager sims – sophisticated and bristling with the kind of technical information only a football purist would appreciate. CM: Quiz is the football triva equivalent – a game full of rock-hard questions requiring an almost inhuman knowledge of the sport to answer.

This is not for someone who watches the odd Champions League match on ITV. From being asked who scored a free kick for England against Greece recently, you then are quizzed on who the record goalscorer in the history of Halifax Town is. This means the casual football fan will have as much chance as Shrewsbury Town have of signing David Beckham, and will enjoy it about as much as an Everton fan in the Kop end at Anfield.

The main game mode has you 'passing' the ball from player to player by getting questions right until your striker has it, at which point a correct answer will score a goal. Get one wrong and possession reverts to the opposition. This is not a bad system but it means only two can play and while the player in possession is answering questions, the other can only watch.

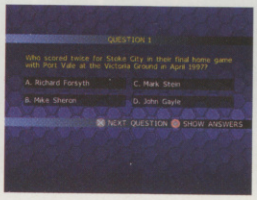
Presentation is spartan, bordering on awful – a green background, text-only questions and pictures of footie shirts. Still, at least this allows enough space for a whopping 11,000-plus questions. Being able to choose questions specific to the team you support is another nice touch.

But at the final whistle it's a lifeless try at making a quiz into a videogame, with questions so obscure that it'll make you feel like a football dullard.



You get three Who Wants To Be A Millionaire type lifelines to use, shown at the bottom of the screen. You'll need them all

This is as good as it gets visually, we're afraid



If you don't know this one you must be a soooo dim

CVG RECKONS

Rock hard and pretty damn dull footie quiz that's not worth anyone's cash. **Steve**

3

If you like this try these...
The game below (PSone, PC)

Sky Sports Football Quiz

Trivia game or reactions tester?

COST: **£19.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-4**
DEVELOPER: **HOTHOUSE CREATIONS**
PUBLISHER: **THQ**

Like Sky TV itself, SSFQ is full of flashy logos, swooshing sound effects, thumping theme tunes and babes. Well, the voice of a babe – Sky Sports's Kirsty Gallacher to be exact, and whether she qualifies as a babe in the first place is as debatable as England's third goal in the 1966 World Cup.

Unlike Sky Sports, though, it's mercifully advert-free. It makes good use of sound clips and picture. And in contrast to CMQ, up to four players can compete, all answering the same questions.

Dream Team mode sees you earning cash for correct answers to buy players to build up a team, while in League mode you play 'matches' against other teams and the speed of your answer determines how many goals you score. Or you can keep things simple and play the quick-fire penalty shootout game. The problem is that the emphasis is on how fast you can answer the questions. And with a confusing button layout and often very easy questions, it's often more a reactions test than a measure of football knowledge.

Overall, this is about getting a bunch of mates round and having a laugh, but we still reckon you're better off just buying a football trivia questions book and putting the £15 you saved towards a videogame. Which, strictly speaking, neither of the games on this page is.

Questions are often easy

The trivia World Cup continues

Pretty graphics, thumping soundtrack – you know it's Sky

Play a cup or league game

Dream Team mode is fun

CVG RECKONS

One for when the boys are round and you're waiting for the TV match to start. **Steve**

6

If you like this try these...
Not the game above (PSone, PC)

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **EVOLUTION STUDIOS**
PUBLISHER: **SONY**

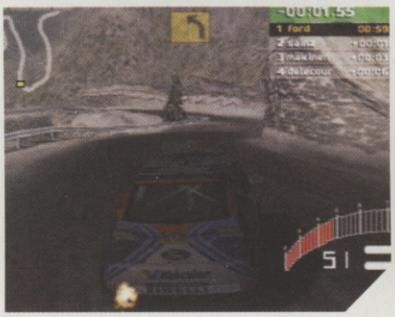
World Rally Champ

Yet another PS2 driving game, but this one's a little dirtier

If the sleek, shiny and sexy racing models in Gran Turismo 3 leave you cold, then you're probably the sort of person who yearns for something a little dirtier. And if it's getting mucky that turns you on, you'll be hard pushed to find a filthier game than World Rally Championship. Based on the real FIA World Rally Championship, WRC the game incorporates all the official teams, drivers and cars as well as the tracks to give rally fans a genuinely realistic experience.

The slippery action is staged in 14 rallies across the world, taking in countries as diverse as Greece, Australia, Cyprus, Portugal and good ol' Blighty. Each individual rally is split into five stretches of road, meaning that drivers have to skid their way through 70 different stages... and that's not to mention the secret tracks.

A realistic morning mist descends



If you spin off, you get put back on course

CVG FACT

For extra realism even the crowd members standing by the roadside have been motion-captured. But don't blink or you'll miss them.

Each country throws up its own set of problems, whether they be the dusty mountain trails of Argentina, the icy roads of Sweden or Spain's torturously twisting tarmac. The car set-ups can be fully tweaked before a race begins, allowing you to kit out your turbo-charged monster with all the equipment it needs to stay ahead of the pack.

EYE-POPPING REALISM

WRC's most impressive feature is its obsessive attention to detail. The developer used satellite data and thousands of photos to create tracks that look and feel exactly like the real deal.

And their efforts certainly weren't wasted. All the environments stretch as far as the eye can see, making you feel as if you're burning along real stretches of road in a living, breathing world. The effect is so convincing that you'll find your heart leaping into your mouth as your back wheels skid over the edge of a cliff, leaving the car teetering on the brink of a pant-stainingly scary drop.

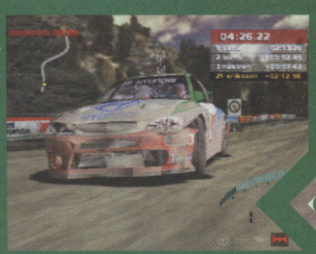
More importantly, the game perfectly captures the unique atmosphere of rally racing. From the excellent in-game

WRECKING CREW

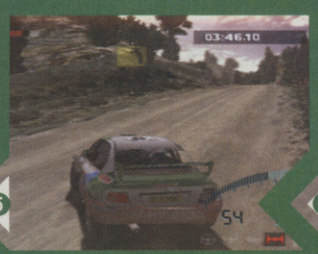
It isn't only the tracks that are realistic as the cars themselves can suffer damage too. Ploughing into trees or rolling down the sides of mountains will mess up your motor, smashing the windscreen, busting body panels and eventually cocking up the steering, leaving the vehicle drifting to one side of the road. It will also get coated in dust on the dirt tracks or splattered with mud when it's raining.

The best way for your car to suffer damage is to throw it off a cliff. Idiot

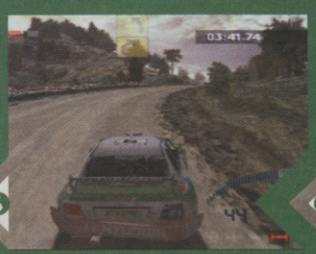
The first-person view – through a knackered windscreen



What started out as a beautiful car is now totally destroyed. Oops

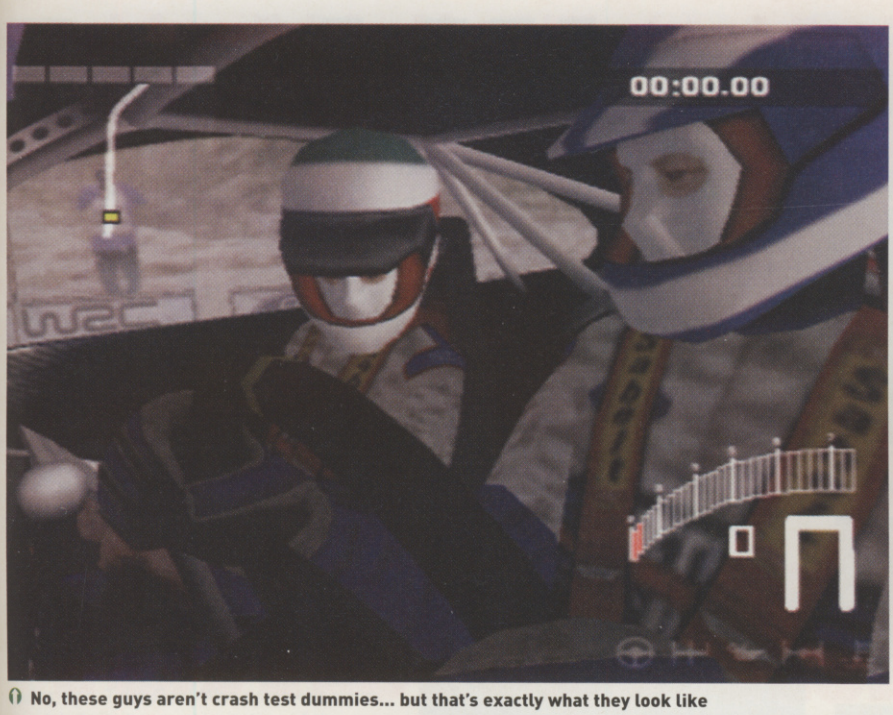


As well as damage, your car will gather a coat of dust and dirt



A few more crashes and your rear bumper will be hanging off

Minor scrapes will bust out body panels. Won't be easy opening doors



No, these guys aren't crash test dummies... but that's exactly what they look like

Harsh sunlight blinds you in the mountain levels

Where's the car wash?

pionship

These steep roads down the side of mountains are incredibly scary to race down. Well, there have to be some thrills in what is otherwise quite soulless gameplay

The icy tracks are the hardest – you'll take corners at a snail's pace

directions of your co-driver to the manic fans cheering by the roadside, WRC creates the feeling that you're participating in a proper event, rather than simply pressing the right buttons.

STYLE OVER CONTENT

But while WRC can't be faulted on its graphics, atmosphere or presentation, playing the game is a rather soulless experience. Although you compete against other drivers, your main opponent is the clock steadily ticking away as you struggle to stay on the track.

Okay, we know rallying is all about completing courses in the fastest time possible, but the absence of other cars robs the game of any urgency. And it's hard to get excited by the stat boxes which appear in the corner of the screen to let you know how well you're doing.

The car handling is much too easy as well, allowing seasoned gamers to fly through the entire championship in a couple of sittings. So long as you concentrate and remember to brake on every corner, staying in first place is a breeze, even if you can't be arsed fiddling with the car set-ups.

Driving in such a restrained style quickly becomes boring. And while games such as GT3 and Burnout reward drivers who are willing to take chances to nudge ahead of the pack, risky moves in WRC will simply result in your car rolling down the side of a mountain.

While mastering GT3 will make you believe you're a good driver, using the same tactics over and over again in WRC feels more like cheating. There should be a big sticker on the front of the box saying 'WRC welcomes careful drivers'.

Fans of the real WRC will probably love the game as it's the only PS2 title which captures the rallying atmosphere, beautiful locations and mud. But casual racing fans will feel short-changed by such an undemanding title, instead yearning for the sophistication of GT3 or the adrenaline rush of Burnout.

Careful drivers welcome

Just one false move...

CVG RECKONS

Rally fans might give WRC a score of 8, but if you want excitement and speed from your PS2, you'd be better off looking elsewhere for your driving thrills. **Dave M**

7

If you like this try this...
Colin McRae Rally 2.0 (PSone)

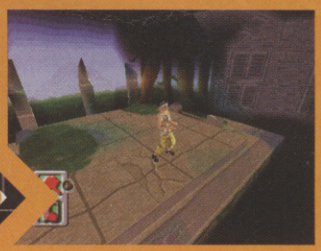
ALL THE RIGHT MOVES

One of the few areas of Popstar Maker where you actually get to do anything other than fiddle with a few knobs is in Music Editor mode. Here you can compose your own bangin' tunes, albeit using a somewhat limited range of samples. However, It's already been done much better on other mixing games.

The studio screen. But where are the drugs, tarts and booze?

Record your tune, then decide how much money to spend on publicity

If your single sells well you can book an appearance at a big venue



Eventually your band performs live. Too bad about the shoddy graphics

Popstar Maker

Take some friendly advice, Nasty Nigel – don't choose this game

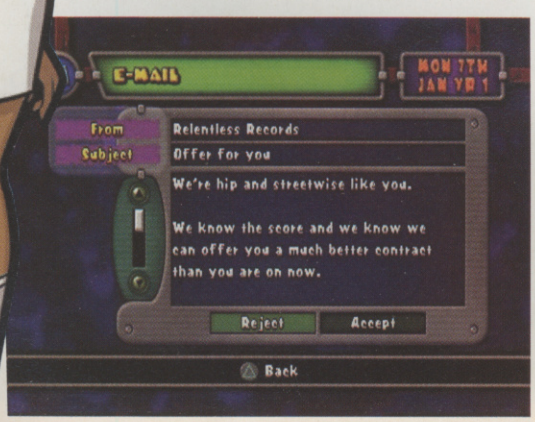
COST: **£34.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **TEQUE SOFTWARE**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS INTERACTIVE**

TV shows like Pop Stars and Pop Idol are all about taking ordinary boys and girls with a smidgen of talent and turning them into drooled-over icons of pop superstardom. If you've ever wondered how it might feel to get your hands on the likes of Kim and Myleene and make them do your bidding, Popstar Maker promises you the opportunity. Unfortunately it's just a great big tease.

You start off by selecting the human fodder for your pop masterplan from a pool of fuzzy-looking hopefuls with names like Naz and Doc. You can have up to five members in your band and it's up to you whether or not you want an all-male or all-female line-up or a mixture of both. Once chosen, you can then fiddle with their hair, clothing and general style, but the options are very limited.

Doc's tight headband makes him cranky, so you'll need to do some work on those mood swings

Don't take the first contract offer that comes along



BACKSTREET BORES

Once you have your contract you have to plan a campaign to take them to the top. This just means that you navigate through a series of dull screens where you book studio time, contrive a training programme to brush up on their singing, dancing and perverse personality defects and read the occasional email from slimy executives. Make them a success and you win a trophy. Fail and you're bankrupt. That's it.

Diaries should be more exciting than this

CVG RECKONS

A missed opportunity even teeny-boppers should avoid. **Maura**

2

If you like this try this...
The Weakest Link (PSone)

Real War

War's bad, but surely not *this* bad...

COST: **£29.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-4**
DEVELOPER: **RIVAL INTERACTIVE**
PUBLISHER: **VIVENDI**

Make love, not war. Whose crap idea was that? Games about swapping bodily fluids just wouldn't get past the censors in anywhere other than Japan. Besides, filling some gung-ho sap with lead slugs is a much better foundation for creating a videogame.

But developers still manage to get the whole war thing wrong, even though Command & Conquer did it perfectly years ago. Take Real War as an example - not only is it a poor imitation of the mighty C&C, it fails to move the genre on and even the 'selling point' of controlling real-life units won't appeal to anyone but the saddest of warmongers.

Innovation is in short supply. Sure, you can drop leaflets on enemy troops to lower morale, but the clunky control interface soon puts a dampener on any fun you're having. It's also extremely difficult to work out which unit type you're commanding, even when you zoom in close. Not good.

Using satellites to spy on enemy troops may be a class idea, but it ultimately gets lost amid a sea of mediocre missions. There's little to sink your teeth into and after you've completed a handful of 'destroy everything' objectives the last thing you want is to wade into another full-on firefight.

Unfortunately, even the resource management side of the game borders on the dire compared to Command & Conquer, so there's little to stop Real War from being taken off the shelves and shot for pooping in its own trench.

Your naval forces can build Cruise missiles

In the heat of battle formations make little difference

Bomb desert bases. Zzz

Send in the ground forces

CVG RECKONS

Fundamentally flawed and ultimately tedious, challenging due only to its awkward interface. Les

4

If you like this try these...
C&C: Red Alert 2 (PC), Dune (PS2)

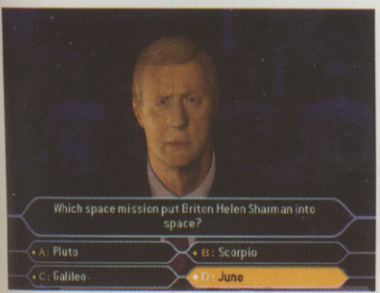
Who Wants To Be A Millionaire: 2nd Edition

You'll be £40 further away now

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-4**
DEVELOPER: **REVOLUTION SOFTWARE**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**

Having passed through a Star Trek-style dimensional warp while asleep, we appear to have landed on the planet Dumbass. This is a place where all the cool games that have had millions spent on them to ensure good design and clever ideas get their arses kicked by something that costs a lot less to make and only sells 'cos it's based on a hit television show.

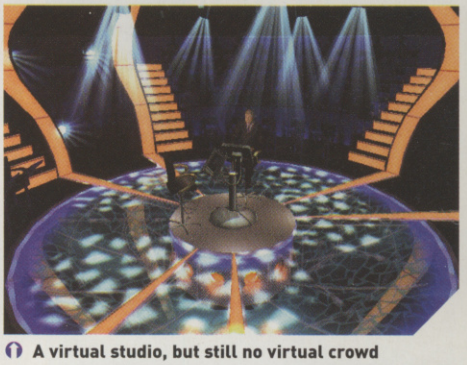
Answering multiple choice questions. What a stonkingly good gameplay idea. We don't care if they are asked by an uber-detailed 20,000 polygon model of Chris 'final answer?' Tarrant. Anyway, this is a model so horrendous that it'll scare young children who catch a glimpse while waiting for the adults to finish playing so they can get back to SmackDown!.



Watch the TV show instead. It's free

New additions this time, apart from the Frankenstein's monster look-a-like virtual presenter, include the multiplayer games Head-to-Head and Fastest Finger. The rules for both are predictably simple: in Head-to-Head you answer questions to amass money and a rival does the same. The one with most cash wins. Fastest Finger introduces the prelim round – whoever wins goes on to the main game.

Your parents will love this, which should tell you a lot – just check out their music collection to see how weird their tastes are. Can we go back to planet Earth now, please?



A virtual studio, but still no virtual crowd

Play Fastest Finger? Okay Chris, here's two...

CVG RECKONS

A non-gamer's game missing one key ingredient – gameplay. But it'll sell huge and the multiplayer mode is *almost* a redeeming feature. Add extra points if you're old. Les

4

If you like this try these...
WWTBAM (PSone), Weakest Link (PS2)

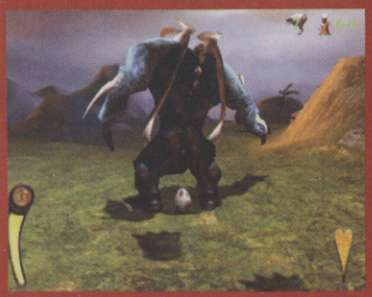
Giants: Citizen Kabuto

It's big but it's not clever. Remember, folks, size isn't everything

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **DIGITAL MAYHEM**
PUBLISHER: **INTERPLAY**

It may sound big and bad but though the landscapes in Giants are enormous and there are tons of missions, this is essentially an average fantasy 3D adventure. It lacks visual innovation, a super-strong story line and gripping gameplay.

The landscapes are enormous but not that special



Who said blokes couldn't lay eggs?

What a lovely pagoda

You start off as a Mecc

Play as three races: check out Delphi

You start as the Predator-style Mecc, trudging around expansive terrains, massacring clusters of ugly bug aliens and performing tasks for island natives called Smarties. There's even a sprinkling of tactics as you issue basic orders to other members of your team, who luckily are smart enough to be prove fairly useful.

However, the pace of the game is a little too slow, and you're only likely to get hooked a few long hours into the game, if ever. The environments that two years ago looked good on PC now seem dated on PS2, and worst of all you don't have access to the other player races from the start. Admittedly, Giants may be a large adventure, but the amount of fun to be had is too small at this price.

5

More holes than a block of Swiss cheese: this should be driven to the nearest scrap heap

18 Wheeler

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **SEGA**
PUBLISHER: **ACCLAIM**

Only rednecks, road hogs, and mental midgets will find excitement in 18 Wheeler. Plodding along in a truck that feels like it's barely moving isn't CVG's idea of fun, and with only four short levels, 18 Wheeler is a bulky blunder.

Okay, it looks fantastic, the characters are funky, there's loads going on and the concept of smashing up highways with a view to delivering your cargo in time is sound. But the gameplay is full of holes. The routes on each level are painfully linear, the challenges undynamic and the replay value is almost non-existent. Even multiplayer is a chore.

4

Driven

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **BAM! ENTERTAINMENT**
PUBLISHER: **BAM! ENTERTAINMENT**

You'll find more excitement riding the kiddy Postman Pat van in your local Tesco

That rickety old action hero Sly Stallone has got a new racing movie coming out, and guess what? They've made a game out of it. Oh mercy.

In a similar vein to Midway's CART Fury, Driven sees you 'zip' around a series of bland tracks in a vehicle that handles with all the grace, finesse and control of a water buffalo.

Comparisons to great racing games like GT3 are pointless, because this isn't in nearly the same league. There's nothing at all impressive about Driven, not even graphically.

3

Floigan Bros.

COST: **£29.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **VISUAL CONCEPTS**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**

This goofball puzzle adventure about two brothers has been a long time coming, but though the end product looks and sounds great, the game is far too short and it's too easy to score highly.

You control the smarter sibling, Hoigle, and use your dim-witted bruv, Moigle, to solve hair-brain puzzles scattered over the 13 areas of the junkyard – the Floigans' home. The humour does make you smirk but the gameplay simply isn't tough enough to hook any serious gamer. A beautifully presented game that lacks the depth of a classic adventure – definitely one for a younger audience.

6

The exchanges resemble the cheesy humour of a Chuckle Brothers sketch

Jet Ski Riders

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **OPUS**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**

Kirby did PS2 bit-parts to make ends meet 'cos his Crystal Shards pay cheque was late

The water looks good and it's pretty fast, but Splashdown's already out and, to be quite honest, it's a much better game than Jet Ski Riders. As for owning both, why bother?

It all lies in the handling: Splashdown was easy to pick up and you felt in control of your jet ski as it was skimming across the ocean. Jet Ski Riders just doesn't offer the same level of control, unfortunately, and to top it all it's not as smooth as it should be on PlayStation 2, unlike the more convincing Splashdown. And although the licensed skis add authenticity, it just doesn't cut it against other arcade racers.

4

One Piece Mansion

COST: **£19.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM**
PUBLISHER: **CAPCOM**

As concepts for puzzle games go, this one is certainly unusual. You play a landlord who has to keep tenants happy in a block of flats, to make sure their rent keeps flowing in.

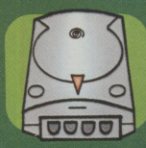
You do this by moving the little guys around so they don't wind each other up and by avoiding putting some yob who plays music too loud next to an old granny who cannot stand Limp Bizkit. It's all about balance, and as a puzzler this isn't all that bad. Chances are it's a bit too surreal for most though, and just too limited due to lack of multiplay.

6

The neighbours are getting stressed. Calm them down before they all move out

Cue those pantomime-style "He's behind you" shouts. Yes, it's quite dull

Heavy Metal: Geomatrix



COST: **£29.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM**
PUBLISHER: **CAPCOM**

Outtrigger did arena-based combat quite well. Heavy Metal: Geomatrix doesn't. Graphically this puppy isn't as good, which is a bad start, but it could come back with some killer gameplay.

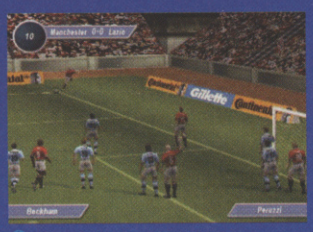
Sadly it falls short in this department too – every fight descends into a chaotic mess, with enemies constantly dodging missile fire and ranks of troops getting entangled in hand-to-hand combat. It's not long before you're stuck in a rut, repeating the same thing over and over again. Heavy Metal? Well, you'll bang your head – on a wall.

4

David Beckham Soccer

At last, Beckham fails at something

A trademark Beckham curler



Knock in the free kicks

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **RAGE**
PUBLISHER: **RAGE**

He's the England captain, one of the highest-paid footballers around and he's bumping uglies with a Spice Girl. No wonder David Beckham is so famous. But his luck has just changed, because he's slapped his name and face over a new footie game, and one that's got more in common with a Sunday league kickabout than the silky skills he's used to.

There are two main faults with the game: the first is the control system, which is clunky and doesn't offer much in the way of team play compared to the flowing footie of Pro Evolution Soccer. In fact, remember that touch-perfect passing from ISS and the way you felt you were in control of everything? Well forget it now. Blind luck seems as important an element here as anything else.

Van Nistelrooy won't be celebrating when Melchiot's boot lands in his groin

Its second problem is that it doesn't look great, even when compared to other PSone strikers like ISS Evolution 2. However, if you're a fan of Beckham rather than football games, there's loads of stuff to get stuck into, including a complete history of the man himself. Then again, why not just buy his autobiography if you want to know what Beckham's been up to, and leave the class footie action to the likes of Pro Evolution, where it belongs.

4

choose your pet

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Your Keipo can be downloaded on to Vodafone or Cellnet just follow these simple instructions. Calls from mobile phones may be charged at a higher rate so we recommend you use an ordinary phone when ordering your CYBER PET.

Once you have received your Keipo you will need to care for it. By feeding and interacting with it just follow these simple steps

Step 1	Call **0906 120 6409**
Step 2	Enter in the 4-digit code of the pet you require
Step 3	You will be asked if you want a boy or a girl pet
Step 4	Enter in your mobile phone number
Step 5	Tell us which network you are on Vodafone or Cellnet

The more you care for your Keipo the stronger and healthier it will become. Every time you text your Keipo it will text you back this will cost a total of 10p per message – just like any other text message.

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Visit KeipoWorld at **www.keipo.co.uk** and interact with other Keipo owners through chat rooms and discussion forums, enter your Keipo into competitions such as Disco Dancing and running. You can also check out how your Keipo is growing.

To communicate with your Pet you can text using the 5-digit phone number that will appear in the first text message we send to you.

To get further instructions visit the Keipo website or text the word **'HELP'** to the special 5-digit phone number.

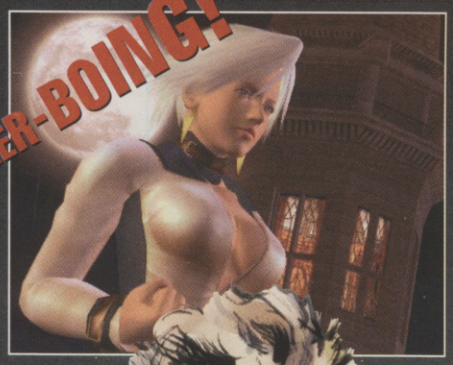
Please ask permission from the person responsible for paying the phone bill before making a call to this service. Calls cost £1.50 per min. Total cost of call £3.00 and maximum length of Service 2 mins. Calls from mobiles may be charged at a higher rate so we recommend you use an ordinary phone. Customer help line number 0870 756 8959 For a list of instructions you can write to Synetex PO Box 144 Stockport SK4 3FT

Next Month In computer and video GAMES

UNREAL TOURNAMENT 2

Spawn of the Daddy of all shooters. CVG goes Stateside to assist with the birth. Oh, and we got to play Unreal 2 as well

Played It!

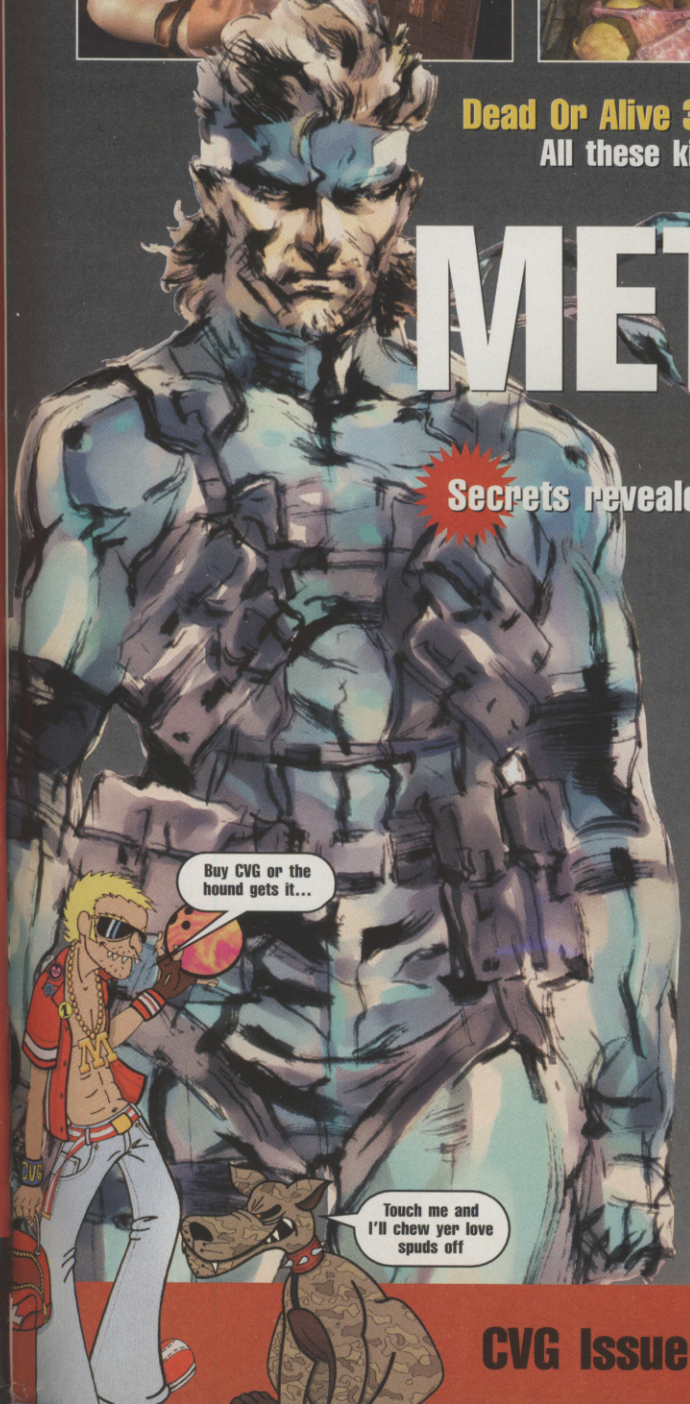


Dead Or Alive 3... Munch's Oddysee... Project Gotham Racer...
All these killer games rated in another Xplosive CVG Xbox spesh

METAL GEAR SOLID 2

Secrets revealed!

The PS2's hottest game is finally here. Find out what makes Metal Gear the hottest game on ANY console



OUCH! IT'S MAX PAYNE RATED!

Go undercover into a world of hurt on PS2

CVG Issue 243. On sale Thursday 17 January

HANDHEL

CVG'S INDISPENSABLE GUIDE TO THE BEST WAYS TO KEEP YOUR

BREATH OF FIRE

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**

Six pints of lager, two kebabs and a pack of fags: a guaranteed way to wake up with breath of fire the next morning. But luckily for the person who you might wake up next to, there's a more sociable way to recreate the feeling of flaming fiery dragon breath. All you have to do is grab a GBA and a copy of the epic RPG Breath of Fire. It's a whole lot easier on the palette.

You can almost hear this giant dragon roaring out of the screen at you

KISS THE DRAGON

You start the game as a young lad called Ryu, a member of the Light Dragon clan who are currently at war with the Dark Dragon clan. In his valiant attempts to bring the Dark Dragon goons to their knees, and as he meets and befriends fellow warriors, Ryu learns more about the innate dragon spirits within him, eventually mustering the ability to transform into frightening, foul-breathed beasts in battle.

CRY BABY, CRY

The world map in BoF is enormous and you and your band of heroes have to journey from town to town, fixing the many problems created by the Dark Dragons and tackling the fiends head on when you get the chance. The wealth of sub-quests gives a real sense of a miniature little world, and the richness of the unfolding saga sometimes rivals the emotional plotting of Final Fantasy. You're not going to start weeping tears of anguish as you play Breath of Fire, but there's every chance you will find

These guys are hard – get some healing herbs

Hurt the giant ghosts with your magic spells

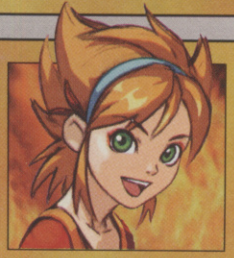
Explore the many towns and get some gossip

BAND OF BEASTS

There are eight main characters to seek out and recruit in Breath of Fire. You start the game as blue-rinsed Ryu and then progressively take control of other characters as they become important to the story.

Humans buddy up with beast creatures in your quest for justice and eventually you'll have a whole troop to travel with. Only four appear on screen or in battle at one time, so be sure to pick the best boys for the job in hand. Here's who you can expect to meet.

Ryu: A young lad with the power to transform into different dragon forms to toast bad guys



Nina: A feisty princess who's invaluable to your quest with her magical healing powers

Bo: This wolf-man hero is an expert with ranged weapons and fights with a bow and arrow

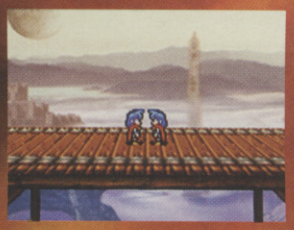
LDS

UR HANDS BUSY

They made one version and canned it. They made another and released it. Here it is!

Gorgeous in-house Nintendo RPG is coming your way ready for next year – don't miss this!

Storm the castle and defeat the guards! It's all good being a hero in this game



Ryu meets... Ryu. Strange

Choose your travelling companions

Four characters can be on screen

"Vital if you enjoy an epic quest"

yourself pausing for an impressed little instant at the scope and grandeur of key moments in the plot.

PURE MAGIC

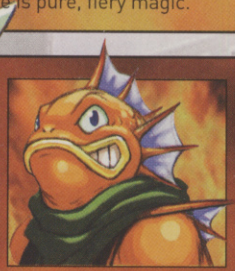
Breath of Fire has a warm place in the hearts of many retro gamers and if you can see past the slightly dated visuals you'll understand why. The story doesn't let up for a second and you're always driven forward by some new mystery unfolding in front of you. The characters you team up with have individual abilities to master in battle and playing around with your equipment reaps massive rewards and is as user-friendly as you could ever want while still being complex enough to keep RPG veterans smiling. If we have one gripe it's that there are just too many random battles – often one every couple of seconds – but even these are hugely enjoyable thanks to the lightning pace of fights and the new skills you acquire through experience.

The game is an outstanding RPG and vital if you enjoy a deep story and an epic quest. It's likely it will be bettered – Nintendo's forthcoming Golden Sun being the first challenger – but until then, Breath of Fire is pure, fiery magic.

Another half-human, half-beast warrior, Ox is powerful enough to shift immovable objects

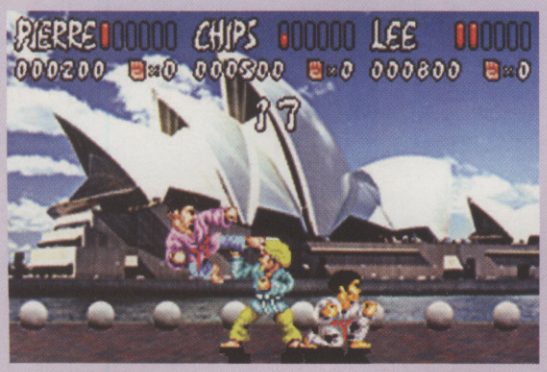
Karn: A member of the thief clan who has the ability to pick locks and open up hidden routes

Mogu: A member of the Mole People with expert burrowing skills – great for sniffing out treasure



Maniro: A fishy hero who comes alive in water where he transforms into a giant sea creature

Bleu: A mysterious lady with awesome magical powers. She holds the secrets of your quest



The backgrounds are quite nice but not a lot happens in them

IK ADVANCED

Formation fights look cool...

...but play like a rabid dog

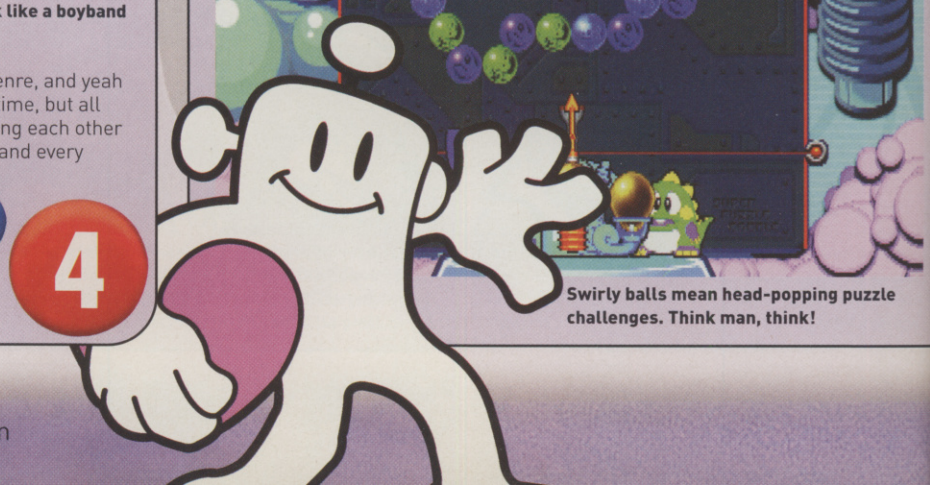
COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **STUDIO 3**
PUBLISHER: **STUDIO 3**

Streetfighter 2's great granddad arrives on GBA and if you're old enough to remember the original, prepare to be dismayed. IK Advanced is horrible, and if you take off the rose-tinted specs for a second, you'll realise that this has probably always been the case. Nostalgia can do very strange things to a person.

With their crazy outfits and moves the guys look like a boyband

THE ICK FACTOR

Yeah, so it helped invent the fighting game genre, and yeah there are three characters on screen at one time, but all this means is that the other two end up fighting each other rather than you. There are no special moves and every character looks and plays pretty much the same. Despite the enemy AI that reacts to how you play, moving onto a new level simply means pressing kick and punch repeatedly in front of a slightly different background. Back to the bad old days, then.



MEGAMAN BATTLE NETWORK

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**

Here's proof that the Internet is evil: a secret conspiracy is sending viruses into people's homes and making, among other things, their ovens blow up! Spooky.

You step into the shoes of Lan and his digital buddy Megaman, and explore both the real and digital world, battling viruses and solving the mystery. It's an RPG,

The isometric viewpoint makes a change

Successful strategy equals enemy death!

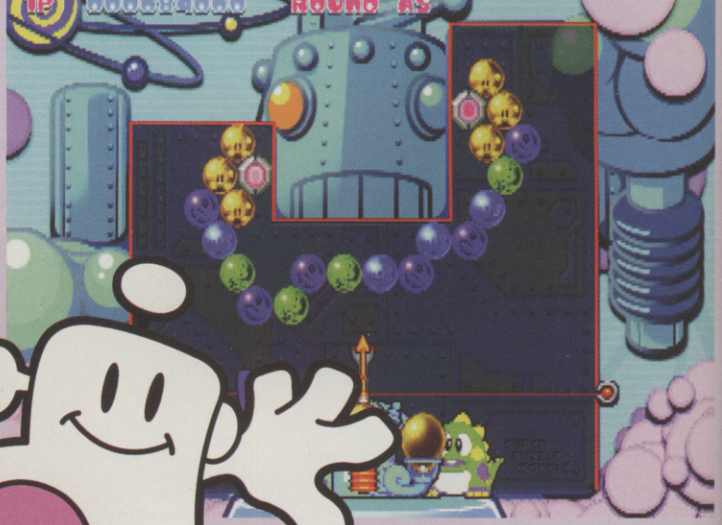
it's a bit like Pokemon, and actually it's fantastic.

MEGAMAN ANTIVIRUS

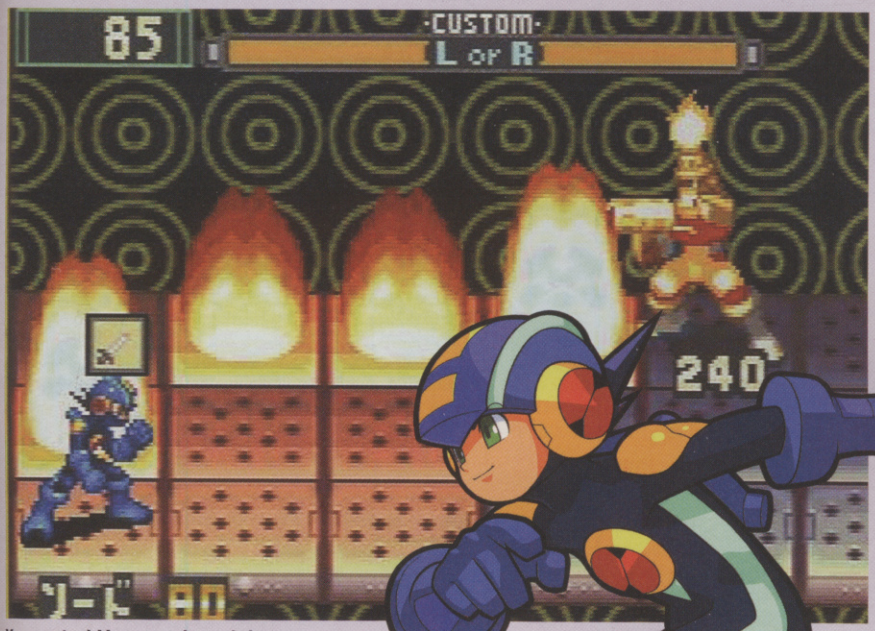
It might not be what you're expecting but if you spend some time learning how it works, Battle Network really shines. What sets this apart is the outstanding battle system. Fights with viruses and challenges from other

SUPER BUST-A-MOVE

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **TAITO**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**



Swirly balls mean head-popping puzzle challenges. Think man, think!



You control Megaman in real time

characters are a mixture of real-time and turn-based strategy. You choose one turn's moves – represented by different chips – and are then free to move Megaman around the arena before deciding when to execute. You can queue up multiple attacks and use sneaky tactics too. It all depends on using the right chips. It's original, unusual and the two-player link battles are amazing.

8

There's just no keeping a good puzzle game down. The Bust-A-Move series has spanned all the formats and now it's GBA's turn to get a tasty slice of the balloon-bursting puzzle action pie. Use your cannon at the bottom of the screen to aim and shoot coloured bubbles onto bubbles of the same colour above. There are three different – and lengthy – play modes, as well as some cool two-player games to try.

Two-player action is as good as it ever was

Pretty hearts, girlie colours but rock-hard game

INSERT 'BALLS' GAG HERE

Super Bust-A-Move does nothing you've not seen already in the other versions but it's still so delicious to play that it hardly matters. The Normal mode punishes your brain with tricks and traps like shrunken bubbles and super bouncy walls, while the Classic game offers screen after screen of tough challenges. Both modes are huge and excellent fun. The graphics are lovely, though larger visuals would have been nice, otherwise it's as perfect a puzzler as you could wish for.

8

AND THE REST

Also out this month on Game Boy Advance

TANG TANG

A colourful but air-headed experience

Build and destroy blocks to make walkways so your weird hero can collect the treats on each level. Avoid enemy characters by jumping or trapping them with your blocks. That's it. Simple, colourful, but essentially pretty shallow.

5

SNOOD

Rip-off: don't tell the lawyers!

A puzzle game that plays almost exactly like Super Bust-A-Move minus the crazy colours and lunatic charm. Snood's playable, but the plain looks and rubbish sound remind us a bit of old Commodore 64 games. Easier than B-A-M, but nowhere near as cool.

6

CHU CHU ROCKET

Puzzle mayhem that's not for everyone

This is a near-perfect conversion of the Sega multiplayer puzzle game. Some love Chu Chu for its manic pace and the need for lightning-quick reflexes; others hate the fact it's incredibly tough and limited fun on your own. See if you can try it out first.

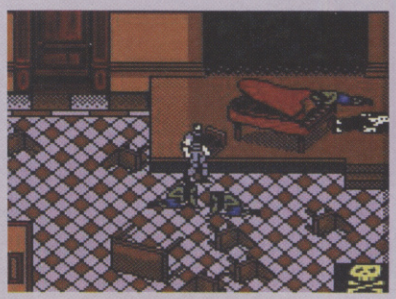
6

RESIDENT EVIL GAIDEN

COST: **£24.99**
PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM**
PUBLISHER: **VIRGIN**

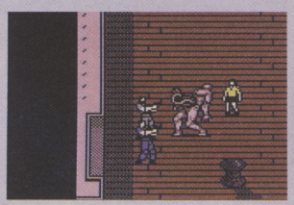
Between us on CVG we've held some pretty horrible things in our hands, but the arrival of Resident Evil on GBC is the first time we've held something that's simultaneously vile while being quite good. Zombies swipe at your head and leave big gashes in your skin (represented by slashes on the screen), mutant hunchback ladies pounce on your head, and gloom-filled corridors hide many a twisted secret. It's all rank and yet on the same machine as the sickly-sweet, super-cute Pokemon games. Yes!

Bosh! Broken jaws as zombies attack in the very cool first-person viewpoint



The graphics are scary – but only because they've got that rough GBC look to 'em

You even get classic cut-scenes



All hell breaks loose on deck

It must be the only

MY NAME IS BARRY

Set on the Starlight cruise liner, Barry Burton, from the first Resi game, has to hunt out the ultimate evil bio-weapon and save Leon S Kennedy from the second Resi game. You control Barry from a top-down perspective when exploring the ship and although presented slightly differently, the gameplay is Resi down to a T-virus. Puzzles involve taking one item and using it at the right moment somewhere else, and are just as much fun and just as frustrating as they have been on other systems.

Where GBC Resi impresses most is in the battle sequences. When you encounter a zombie or monster, the view changes to a first-person perspective and by stopping a moving bar on a target you inflict damage on the approaching zombies. It's a stroke of genius that

Pac-Man Arrangement – fair attempt to be new

Pac-Attack is like Tetris but with ghosts

PAC-MAN COLLECTION

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **NAMCO**
PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**

You can now push yourself to the pill-popping limit with yet another retro collection, this time solely made up of Pac-Man games. How much Pac do they think a person can take?

You get the original Pac-Man, a redesigned and enhanced version called Pac-Man Arrangement, the 3D jumping joy of Pac-Mania and the sub-Tetris puzzling action of Pac-Attack.

You've played Pac-Man before so really it's up to you to decide if you want to splash £35 on this motley crew of slightly rank old games. Pac-Man Collection is tons better than the other two retro round-ups this month and the games are still hypnotically addictive, but come on, is this really what you bought your GBA for?

NAMCOM

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **NAMCO**
PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**

Namco takes a wet sponge to the inside of its retro bins and presents the scraped-up scum as this collection of 'classic' games: Pole Position, Ms Pac-Man, Dig Dug, Galaxians and Galaga – a slightly better crop than Midway's but still mostly awful by today's standards.

If you have a yearning for all things retro, you'll know about and most likely own these games already. Everyone else shouldn't

Dig Dug: tunnel and inflate enemies

only Resi game where using the knife actually helps

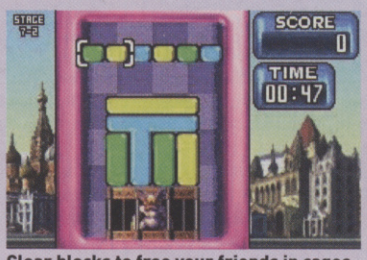
makes sure combat is totally unique yet remains just as edgy as ever.

The one major problem with Gaiden is that the graphics are so damn dark you'll be getting eyestrain headaches after extended play, like we did. If you've got peepers of steel though, you should definitely get gruesome with this.

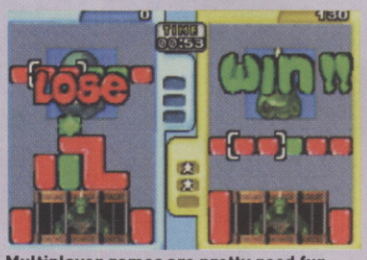
7

RAMPAGE PUZZLE ATTACK

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **MIDWAY**
PUBLISHER: **MIDWAY**



Clear blocks to free your friends in cages



Multiplayer games are pretty good fun

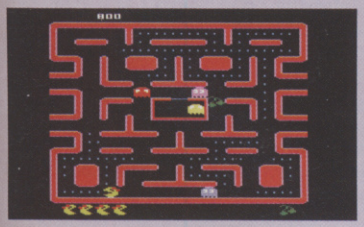
Rampage is an old game where giant monsters destroyed buildings and ate people. Cool but nothing to do with this excellent little puzzle game. Despite its totally random licence, the game plays beautifully. You have to clear all blocks from the well by dropping and matching similarly-coloured blocks onto them.

The twist is there's no time limit – you have to strategically plan which blocks you're going to drop to cause the most chain reactions and point combos. If you're hankering for a tasty Tetris variant you're sure to have a riot. Riot, rampage, geddit? Sigh...

8

CO MUSEUM

It's official: old games are rubbish



Ms Pac-Man strikes a blow for feminism

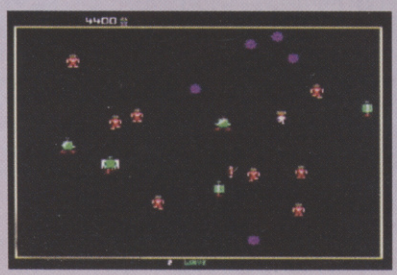
even think about it as there's practically zero depth to any of them and they look dreadful too. The 'retro' label should never be used to mask limited value for money. Very poor.

2

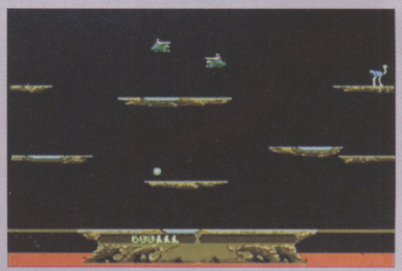
COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **POCKET STUDIOS**
PUBLISHER: **MIDWAY**

MIDWAY'S GREATEST ARCADE HITS

It makes you wonder how Midway has managed to stay afloat so long if these four stinkers represent its greatest hits. Witness how four games that may have been cutting edge 20 years ago have been slapped onto a GBA cart with no additions, extras or incentive to actually make you want to play them. Choose from Defender, Joust, Sinistar or Robotron.



This is Robotron – isn't it thrilling?



In Joust, fly and battle on ostriches. Good grief

Who cares if they may have paved the way for their respective genres? The games look awful and are barely playable by today's standards. They're historical, of course, but utterly shambolic nonetheless.

1

GOLDEN SUN

PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **SPRING 2002**
DEVELOPER: **NINTENDO/CAMELOT**
PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**

Traditional role-playing games are coming of age on GBA. First there was Breath Of Fire, then Megaman and soon the extraordinary Golden Sun. Developed by Nintendo and Camelot, the folks behind the fantastic Shining Force games in the 16-bit days, this adventure looks like it'll be as sumptuous an RPG experience as you could ever want.

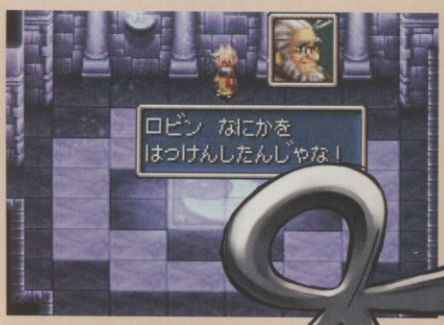
PLOT IN PERIL

As is the case with these 2D RPGs, you play a young hero on a twisty-turny roller coaster of an adventure. It starts off in one direction, then dramatically turns into a quest to save the world. Meet folk along the way to recruit and learn their individual skills. It's not original – few new role-players are – but Golden Sun manages to be awesome in the intricate way it tells the story and in the stunning visuals, which are especially good for GBA.

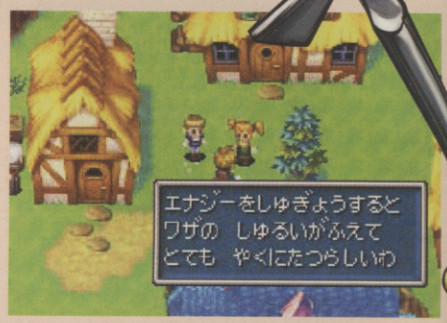
The whole package screams Nintendo quality, and it's the little magic touches that impress the most. Stuff like particle effects and devastating spell animations in battle are incidental but really bring the game to life.

Graphics put other GBA stuff to shame

Explore dungeons and solve puzzles



Rooms are beautifully drawn



Thatched barns and smiling faces – classic RPG

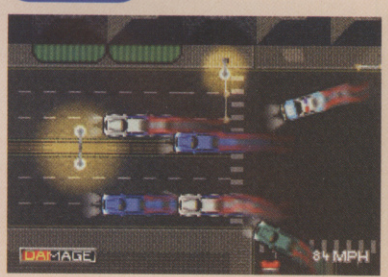
The same goes for the way the screen spins round in pseudo-3D when fight sequences start. The game has fared fantastically well in Japan and America, gaining some of the highest review scores possible. The future is certainly looking bright for GBA-owning RPG fans. Expect a review next month.

CVG RECKONS

With gorgeous visuals, epic plotting and a massive quest, Golden Sun is potentially the most significant handheld adventure game to date, and more proof that Nintendo really does make incredible videogames. Expect to want it more than life itself.

MIDNIGHT CLUB

PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **DECEMBER/JANUARY**
DEVELOPER: **REBELLION**
PUBLISHER: **DIGITAL WORLDWIDE**



Check out the blurry effects. Tasty ain't they?

Street racing is bad. It's also cool as ice, as anyone who watched recent movie The Fast And The Furious will know. If you fancy yourself as king of the road but are too scared to actually risk getting arrested and/or killed by doing it for real, this GBA racer could be right up your exhaust pipe. Inspired by the mediocre PlayStation 2 game of the same name, Midnight Club on GBA offers a similar experience, with vast city maps of New York and London to explore, and plenty of hidden secrets and shortcuts to discover. Drive especially well to impress your fellow Midnight Club drivers and win fat points.

ROCKIN' RACE

The 3D graphics of the PS2 version have been replaced by a detailed but slightly less impressive top-down view, complete with neat lighting effects that'll dazzle your eyeballs. The environments are busy and bustling too, with plenty of folks to terrify as you tear up the streets.

CVG RECKONS

Speed is everything in a top-down racer – let's hope Midnight Club has it in spades.

Okay, it's a rubbish screen

PLAYERS: **1-4**
OUT: **SPRING 2002**
DEVELOPER: **BITS STUDIOS**
PUBLISHER: **TBC**

WIZARDS

Bosh! Big explosions shake the screen impressively

Death warriors AND trolls – not a good combination

Grip your wands in anticipation of this promising role-playing, genre-crossing GBA title. You play an Arch Wizard and have to control a team of characters, building up entire armies of magical warriors to wage war with. The single player game promises a cracking story, blending strategy, arcade and puzzle action.

AGE BEFORE BEAUTY

The multiplayer game should be total mayhem, and you carry over any experience points you earn in the one-player, so veteran adventurers get an advantage over rookie sword-swingers. What's more, Wizards is the sequel to the much-loved Warlocked on GBC, which criminally never got released in Europe. Justice at last, then.

Come on! Time is ticking away and winning is everything

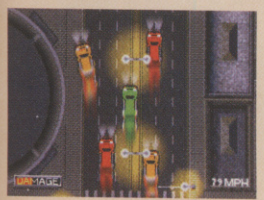
JET RIDERS

PLAYERS: **1-4**
OUT: **SPRING 2002**
DEVELOPER: **BITS STUDIOS**
PUBLISHER: **TBC**

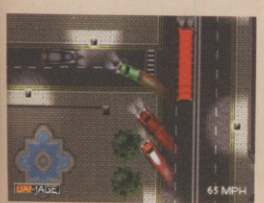
Wet thighs are currently all the rage in videogames, and now GBA gets a taste of seadoo action. Jet Riders is a top-down water racer that tries to blur the lines between arcade action and simulation.

GRAB YOUR WETSUIT

Pull tricks as you race to score major points and go up against your mates and computer-controlled racers across 21 courses. It's fast and plays so well you can almost feel the salty spray stinging your eyes as you go. Four players will be able to race and trick on one cart too. We like.



Keep an eye on your damage meter as you race



The night-time cities look great from this angle

INCOMING

GBA games to look out for early next year

MONSTERS, INC.

It's the game of the Disney/Pixar movie we'll all be watching next year. The graphics look pretty special and there's a random map generator for different levels and a fresh challenge every time you play. Could be good.

Furious furry critters on GBA

ARMY MEN OPERATION GREEN

Stop laughing. The last GBA Army Men game was actually pretty enjoyable, so you never know, the series' second outing on GBA could be another surprise. This time it's a shoot 'em up style adventure across land, sea and er, dinner table.

Toy soldiers still feel real pain and anguish – war is pure hell, isn't it?

BROKEN SWORD

The classic point and click adventure game is being ported to GBA and the screens look gorgeous. The original was great but it may well be a dated formula now, and we're keen to see how the GBA screen will cope with the tiny objects you need to find.

Please get it right, developer boys

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CVG Trailb

'Tis the season to be jolly, and CVG wants to make sure of that by spreading Christmas glee with these awesome prizes

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Spreading tidings of Christmas joy right across the nation like a giant jolly elf, CVG, in a fit of extraordinary generosity, has rustled up some of the best games around. And we're ready to shower you all with our bulging sack of happiness. So cast aside those crappy gifts from senile relatives and get your entries in for a chance of winning a sparkling new PS2, Batman Vengeance and the likes of GTA3, Warioland 4 and Devil May Cry. Ho, ho, ho!

7th POLAROID PETE & POLAROID i-ZONE CAMERA

COURTESY OF **JVC**

Take photos of some of the craziest videogame scenarios ever. Where else can you creep through a steamy bathhouse taking shots of blushing Japanese businessmen, erupting volcanoes, and giant ghosts?

Q. In Polaroid Pete who sends you out on to the streets to take snaps?

A. A newspaper editor **B.** A pervy pimp **C.** A private dick **D.** An anthropologist

6th PEARL HARBOR DVD

COURTESY OF **TOUCHSTONE HOME VIDEO/BUENA VISTA ENTERTAINMENT**

More explosions than in a balti house bog. Pearl Harbor's on DVD and we have ten copies.

Q. Which Hollywood superstars play best friends and flying partners in Pearl Harbor?

A. Johnny Depp & Bruce Willis **B.** Ewan McGregor & Josh Hartnett
C. Matt Damon & Ben Affleck **D.** Josh Hartnett & Ben Affleck

5th WARIOLAND 4

COURTESY OF **NINTENDO**

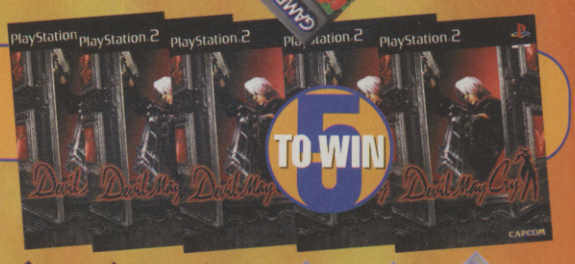
Warioland 4 melts your eyes and knocks you over with its awesome originality.

Q. What impressive landmark is at the centre of the Warioland 4 adventure?

A. Sapphire skyscraper **B.** Ruby castle **C.** Golden violin **D.** Emerald lap-dancing club

4th DEVIL MAY CRY

COURTESY OF **CAPCOM**



Armed with a broadsword the size of Bristol and a pair of power-packed pistols, your job in Capcom's latest adventure is to slay demons in an uber-cool action stylee.

Q. What's the name of the silver-haired hero in Devil May Cry?

A. Dante **B.** Darth **C.** Draco **D.** Diomedes

3rd GRADIUS ADVANCE & ISS

COURTESY OF **KONAMI**

It's Christmas time, and what could be more pleasing than curling up in front of a nice warm fire as you roast enemy craft in the weapons-filled world of Gradius, or experiencing the fine football frenzy of ISS on GBA? Nowt.

Q. What's the name of Konami's latest football title on PS2?

A. Pre Evolution Soccer **B.** Post Evolution Soccer **C.** Pro Evolution Soccer **D.** Pele's Excellent Soccer

2nd GRAND THEFT AUTO III & SMUGGLER'S RUN 2

COURTESY OF **TAKE 2**

GTA3 will have you trembling with excitement as you pinch vehicles, and teamed with Smuggler's Run 2 it makes for one seriously mean and hard-hitting combo.

Q. What's the name of the city where all the bloody mayhem takes place in GTA3?

A. Freedom **B.** Liberty **C.** Paradise **D.** Equality

lazer!

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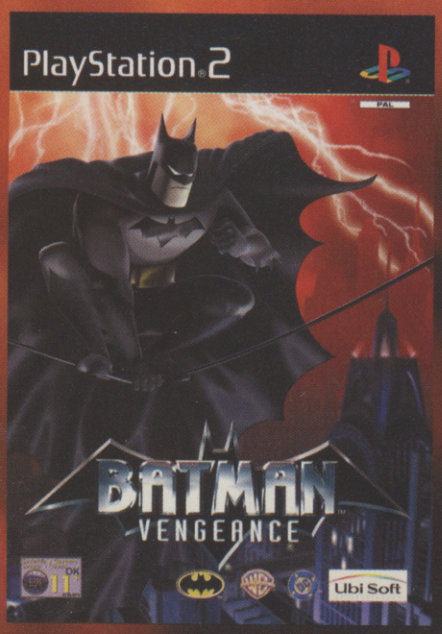
All it takes is seven correct answers and the cost of a stamp to be a contender, so what are you waiting for?

Q. The Caped Crusader is by day a millionaire bachelor who goes by the name of...?

A. Peter Parker
B. David Banner
C. Clark Kent
D. Bruce Wayne



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Tick the correct answer:
A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐ D. ☐

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HUNTER'S BACKSIDE!

Fun With Words!

We've hidden some words in the fun grid below, but the fun part is, we're not going to tell you what they are! You have to find the fun words then rearrange them into a fun sentence. Have fun!

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FUNZZZZASZZAZZ
ZZTRIPZZTOZZZZZ
ZTHEZZZZDENTIST

MORE Fun With Words!

The pesky word burglar has stolen a word from this piece of writing. Can you work out which the naughty word burglar has taken?

"I love [BLANK]. I love the smell of [BLANK] especially. When I was younger I used to collect [BLANK]. There was nothing I liked better than licking a whole mound of [BLANK], then sticking my sloppy collection into a special [BLANK]-collecting album. Once, I sent some [BLANK] to the girl who lived next door, but she complained to the police who took me away and put me in a police cell. Then they sent me to prison where the other prisoners hated me so much they used to line up to deposit their [BLANK] on my head.

Did you guess the word? That's right, it was 'stamps'

"Next-Gen's Not Nerdy Enough!" say nerds

By Bill Crapper

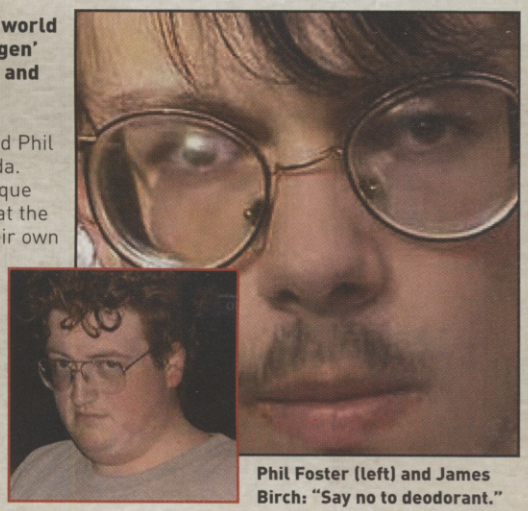
Hoards of angry nerds are claiming the world of geekdom is under threat from 'next-gen' games consoles like Sony PlayStation 2 and Microsoft's XBox.

"A lot of the guys getting into gaming nowadays just aren't nerdy at all," warned Phil Foster, whose Quake name is Torquemada. "The other day I was in Electronics Boutique and there were a couple of guys looking at the PS2s, and you know what? They used their own voices through the whole conversation. Not one funny voice, not a single Fast Show impression, not even Bart! I tell you, I felt ashamed."

Fellow anoraks agreed that the new influx of 'vanilla' gamers could spell the end of the console geek, with many considering a return to the dice-based role-playing games popular with speccy bores in the early '80s.

"I swear that the Computer and Video and Handheld Games Shop just doesn't smell as pungent as it used to," complained acne-scarred James Birch, who runs the Finally Fantasy Fan website. "And it's a sad sign of the times when you're the only one in the shop who's completed Dragon's Lair a dozen times."

In the wake of the outcry, a SNORI poll found 8 out of 10 gamers fell asleep when talking to hardcore gamers about games, 9 out of 10 hardcore gamers didn't care if the person they were talking to fell asleep, and 10 out of 10 gamers fell asleep when asked questions by SNORI about gaming.



Phil Foster (left) and James Birch: "Say no to deodorant."

TONIGHT'S TV

EastEnders, BBC1, 8pm
None of the characters use mobiles, watch television, go to the cinema, read books or go to the toilet. Meanwhile, Sonia is worried about her exam results.

Shafted, ITV, 8.30pm
The quiz show where contestants get to say, "I'd like to shaft Jane", before the water-shed and without laughing. Robert Kilroy-Silk hosts.

Gamez R Grate!, ITV, 4.55am
Lix 'n' Lox review the latest games in a really annoying way. Under the spotlight this week are Pac-Man, Tetris and Donkey Kong. Sponsored by Pro-Plus.

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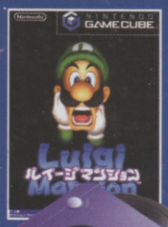

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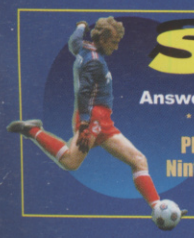

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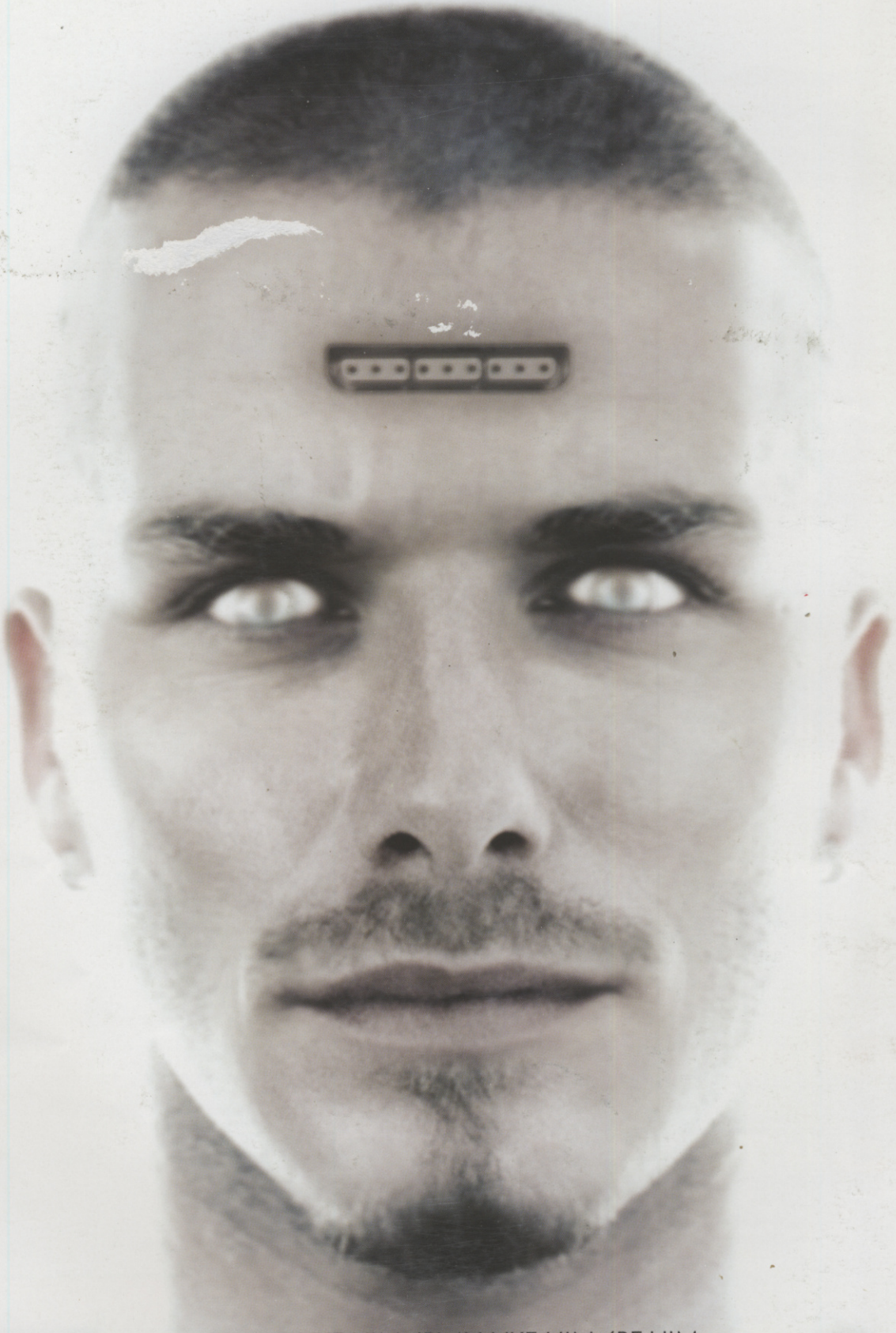
THE GAME



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